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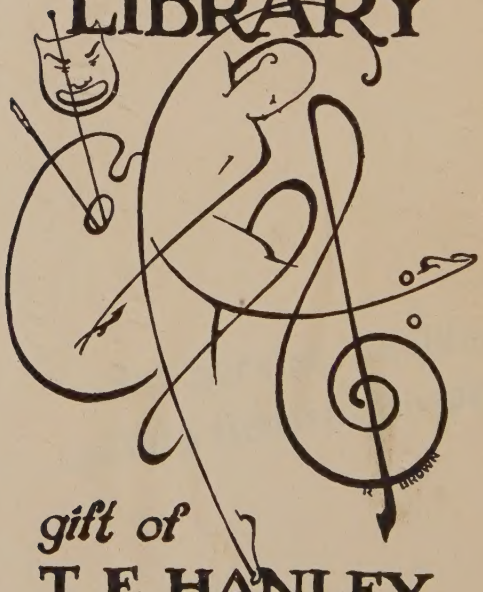

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1. PORTRAIT OF PETER VISCHER

PETER VISCHER

BY

CECIL HEADLAM, B.A.

FORMERLY DEMY OF MAGDALEN COLLEGE, OXFORD; AUTHOR OF "THE STORY OF NUREMBERG," ETC.

LONDON

GEORGE BELL AND SONS

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PREFACE

THE Germans have by nature the gift of working in metal, and, among them, in the realms of bronze, Peter Vischer stands easily first. His position as a craftsman may, in fact, be compared with that held by his contemporary and fellow citizen, Albert Dürer, as an artist. The history of his works and of those of his house, have a peculiar interest to the student of art, inasmuch as they illustrate the gradual but easily traceable passage of the German craftsmen from the style of late Gothic to that of complete neopaganism, and from the school of the Northern painters and sculptors to that of the great Italian masters successively.

I speak of the works of Peter Vischer "and his house," because, in tracing this development, we have to take into consideration not only his works but also those of his father Hermann and of his sons, Hermann and Peter and Hans. The pendulum of criticism has indeed swung more than once since the Emperor Maximilian used to visit Peter Vischer's foundry in Nuremberg, and the questions as to what are actually the works of the Master and what position is to be assigned to him in the world of art, have been answered in more ways than one. For many years, owing partly to the ignorance of most people, and partly

162836

no doubt to the greed of the few, the tendency was to attribute to this one famous craftsman the works of many. At one time almost any work of art in bronze to be found throughout the length and breadth of Germany was attributed to Peter Vischer, just as a Talleyrand or a Sydney Smith has had witticisms of every date and every quality fathered upon him.

From unreasoning praise, again, men passed to equally undiscriminating disparagement. Heideloff arose and wished the world to see in Peter Vischer nothing but the mere craftsman who put into bronze the designs and models of Adam Krafft or another. The admirable labours of Retberg, however, and of Dr. Lübke have shown how little foundation there is for this view, and, more recently, by the application of the principles of more exact art-criticism, Dr. Seeger, in his minute and loving study of Peter Vischer the younger, has vindicated the claim of the great craftsman's son to rank with, or even above, his father as the first and greatest exponent of Renaissance plastic-work in Germany.

To the two latter authors I have been continually and especially indebted whilst writing the present monograph. For the use of very many of the illustrations forming the volume to which Dr. Lübke contributed the text, my best thanks and acknowledgements are due to the publisher, Herr Stein, of Nuremberg.

C. H.

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"A man of amiable conversation and, among natural arts (to speak as a layman), finely skilled in casting."

JOHANN NEUDÖRFFER.

PETER VISCHER

CHAPTER I

HERMANN VISCHER AND THE EARLY GERMAN BRONZE WORK

IT was in the middle of the fifteenth century, a little before the year 1450, to be precise, that there wandered into the streets of Nuremberg a working man, a common coppersmith, one Hermann Vischer by name. He came no one knows whence. He came one can easily imagine why. Like the father of Albert Dürer, and in the same decade, he was attracted to that beautiful, busy old town by the greed of gain, as Shakespeare was drawn to London, and many another worker in other arts and crafts has been drawn to many another town. For Nuremberg at this time was the shining jewel of the Holy Roman Empire, the centre of trade and the meeting place of the Arts. Her geographical position and the business energy of her sons had combined to throw into her lap all the commerce of the east and south, of Italy and the Levant, with the northern nations.

The days were near at hand when this proud, free city of the Empire, this trading staple of the German world, was to win the still nobler title of "Albert Dürer's and Hans Sachs' City." For the merchant princes of the place, the Patricians as they called themselves, whilst they grew in wealth and power, waxed also in enthusiasm for the sciences and arts. They strove to make their town a German Florence, and by their lavish expenditure upon the adornment of public and private buildings, both attracted foreign genius and encouraged native talent. Regiomontanus on the one hand, the great mathematician, chose Nuremberg for his place of residence because he found there all the peculiar instruments necessary for astronomy, and because the "perpetual journeyings of her merchants" enabled him to keep in touch with the learned of all countries. These perpetual journeyings of the merchant princes and great explorers, like Behaim, reacted also upon the artists of the town; they contributed to give them a wider outlook upon life, and brought within their reach the wonderful works of Italy.

The broad culture of a Pirkheimer exercised an undoubted influence upon the many-sided genius of Dürer, whilst the liberal atmosphere engendered by travel made the citizens of Nuremberg ready to welcome in their midst foreign artists like the elder Dürer, the elder Vischer and Veit Stoss, and rendered the local artists themselves susceptible to the excellence of foreign art. Not

that the Nuremberg artists lack the local note. But they readily accepted the ideas of Flemish realism and again of the Italian Renaissance, and translated them into the terms of their own speech. Albert Dürer, for instance, in spite of his wide experience, always speaks in his art like his master Wolgemut, in the Nuremberg dialect. The intense patriotism and the deep religious feeling which formed so intimate a part of the lives of the citizens are reproduced in their art and literature, giving the greatest examples of them the added charm of locality. The religious spirit in which they worked lent a great humility to these craftsmen. Sculpture and painting had indeed been applied with splendid results to the adornment of domestic and public life, results so splendid that the traveller Æneas Sylvius was obliged to confess that the mansions of the burgesses seemed to have been built for princes, and that the kings of Scotland would gladly be housed as luxuriously as the ordinary citizen of Nuremberg. But the chief work of men like Adam Krafft and Peter Vischer was given to the beautifying of the churches. And, working as they did in a deeply religious spirit, it is noticeable that when they represent themselves in paint, bronze, wood or stone, they give themselves the humble pose of suppliants, choosing always the lowliest place, and often, like Krafft in the tabernacle in the Church of St. Lorenz, or Vischer in the Sebaldusgrab in the Church of St. Sebald, they appear in their

working clothes, tools in hand, in the attitude of servants.

There, in a niche of the beautiful shrine he had wrought, with his workman's cap on his head and a large leather apron round his waist, and in his hand hammer and chisel, the signs of his calling, stands thick-set and full-bearded Peter Vischer, the modest, pious labourer, whose reputation had spread beyond the limits of Germany, and whose bronze work, the chronicler tells us, once filled Poland, Bohemia, Hungary, and the palaces of princes throughout the Holy Roman Empire. (Ill. 2.)

When Hermann Vischer came to Nuremberg the bronze industry had long been pursued in Germany, and it had been pursued with some success. The individuality of this indigenous art had been in early times uninfluenced by foreign inspiration. While Venice had to go to Constantinople for the bronze gates of St. Mark's, and Rome was acknowledging the supremacy of Byzantine ideals in the presence of the gates of S. Paolo, in Germany, as Lübke points out, such works as the doors of the Cathedrals of Hildesheim and Augsburg, the tomb-plates at Magdeburg and Merseburg, or the great altar at Goslar, prove the existence, albeit in a very crude and undeveloped state, of a native art in bronze. The twelfth century saw the German foundries supplying many an important font or cathedral door. The work of Lambert Patras von Dinant (1112), the fonts in

the cathedral at Osnabrück, the lions at Brunswick and the doors of St. Sophia at Novgorod, exhibit indeed a very considerable advance both in execution and design. The increasing use of bronze for the sacred vessels and ornaments of the Church extended the scope of the craftsmen, and the hey-day of the early Gothic period saw no lack of tomb-plates, candelabra, and fonts from the German foundries. The workmanship of these is good but undistinguished as it is uninspired. It seldom even approaches in artistic merit the splendid tomb of Konrad von Hochstaden in Cologne Cathedral, or the later, vigorous equestrian statue of St. George in the cathedral at Prague, wrought by Georg and Martin von Clussenbach in 1373.

Nuremberg, in spite of her wealth and commercial importance, had not, at the time of the coming of Hermann Vischer, given birth as yet to any great work of art in bronze. Almost the only old piece of bronze of any importance to be seen in the churches there is the font in St. Sebald's Church. And its importance lies rather in the richness with which it is wrought than in its artistic excellence (1350). This is the font in which the Emperor Wenzel was baptized—a baptism which cost the town the beautiful old parsonage, burnt down by the fires used to heat the water for the imperial infant. The four squat apostolic figures represented here in their straight, heavy mantles bear witness already to that striving after

a realistic representation of the great protagonists in the sacred drama which was beginning to betray itself at this time in the works of the nameless Nuremberg painters on the one hand, and, on the other, of the Nuremberg sculptors, such as Hans Decker, the forerunner of Adam Krafft. It was a tendency which the Nuremberg artists, like their brethren of the Swabian school and the school of Cologne owed to the influence of Flemish art. But this was a return to Nature not without its faults. The German artist, in his eager endeavour to reproduce the exact form of his models, of those, that is, whom he saw around him every day, was badly served by the figures of his countrymen. They could not give him the slim and graceful forms of the Italians to copy, and he had not yet learnt from Italy those theories of beauty, based on a study of the antique, which were one day to help an Albert Dürer to perform the true function of an artist by improving upon Nature.

Of Hermann Vischer himself and his doings we know very little. Very little also of his work survives. We know that he became a Burgher of his adopted town and, in 1453, rose to be a Master in the Guild of Rotschmieds. That he gained some reputation in his day, and not at home only, is shown by the fact that four years later he cast the Font for the parish church at Wittenberg. Several tomb-plates at Meissen and Bamberg are also attributed to him. These confirm us in the impression that he had no great individuality. He

was an excellent workman without being endowed with the superlative excellence of the artist. For the Font at Wittenberg, which is cast in the Gothic manner with small, undistinguished figures of the apostles, is a work of very little importance. In Nuremberg, where he lived in a house "Am Sand" in the Schiessgraben, there is one work which is generally attributed to Hermann, although it is quite possibly from the hand of one Eberhard Vischer who became a master in 1459 and died in 1488, just one year later than Hermann. The work to which we refer is the large bronze Crucifix outside the central window of the Löffelholz chapel of the church of St. Sebald, which was presented by the Starck family in 1482. It was remodelled in 1625, and on that occasion the Nurembergers earned the nick-name of Herrgottschwärzer or Blackeners of the Lord. For the story ran that the cross was made of silver, and that the Council of the town resolved that it should be painted black in order to preserve it from the roving bands of soldiers that passed through the town during the Thirty Years' War. The figure on the cross is that of a Hercules rather than of a Christ. The feet are each nailed separately after the ancient manner.

Hermann Vischer was twice married. By his first wife, Felicitas, he had one daughter, Martha, and one son, Peter, the date of whose birth is not known. By his second wife he had three sons of no importance, and he died in 1487, in the year

which saw the birth of his second grandson, Peter Vischer the younger, to whom, it will be shown in the succeeding chapters, many of the finest works usually attributed to the elder Peter must now probably be credited

CHAPTER II

PETER VISCHER: HIS LIFE

PETER VISCHER, the great bronze-founder, whose work and that of his house embodies the complete transition from the Gothic to the Renaissance style in Germany, was born and brought up in his father's house in "Am Sand." There he lived, and he worked as an apprentice with his father in the Town Foundry in the White Tower all the days of his boyhood. So much we may assume, although we know nothing of his youth, and no one of all the men since dead would be more surprised than he to find himself the subject of a monograph, or would be more genuinely astonished to learn that his up-bringing is a source of interest to later generations. For he appears to us in the few historical documents in which he figures as the perfect type of the plain, unspoilt craftsman or Master of a Guild. A man was not an artist in those days, but a mere stonemason, or smith or painter. But, lacking the title, he did not necessarily lack the quality. The study of design was never more enthusiastic, the struggle after excellence never

more sincere than in the days when Dürer's art was regarded as a mere parasite of other trades, when Hans Sachs was

"Schuh—
—Macher und Poet dazu,"

and when Peter Vischer laboured in his leather apron at the foundry, or turned from the entertaining of Emperors to spend his leisure hours in the endeavour to improve his draughtsmanship. I have said that we know nothing of the latter's boyhood, but if in his case the child was father of the man, he must have been a diligent youth. Johann Neudörffer (1497-1563), an artistic scribe and the man in whom succeeding ages have had to bless the inventor of German type, has left us a charming picture of him in later days. "This Peter Vischer was a man of amiable conversation," he writes in his *Nachrichten über Nürnberger Künstler und Werkleute*, a work which is not indeed free from errors, but to which we owe the earliest accounts we have of most of the Nuremberg artists, "and among natural arts (to speak as a layman) finely skilled in casting and so much renowned among the nobility that when any prince or great potentate came to the town he seldom omitted to pay him a visit in his foundry, for he went every day to his casting shop and worked there."

Adam Krafft the sculptor, we learn from the same source, and Sebastien Lindenast the coppersmith, who made works of art of copper "as if

they had been of gold or silver," were his two bosom friends. They seemed, we are told, to have but one heart. All three were equally simple, disinterested, and ever eager to learn. "They were like brothers; every Friday, even in their old age, they met and studied together like apprentices, as the designs which they executed at their meetings prove. Then they separated in friendly wise, but without having eaten or drunk together." The spirit of the Reformation had breathed upon these men and inspired them with a new and burning zeal for art and knowledge and industry.

As a boy then, we may assume, Peter Vischer worked as an apprentice with his father. For in those days any youth destined for a certain trade had to be apprenticed to some master of that trade, who was responsible for his education both in mind and morals during his years of learning (Lehrjahre). And almost everything made by hand, every manufactured article was the monopoly of some trade corporation. Every trade, too, and almost every department of a trade, had its separate costume. Each craft bore its special garb or mark of distinction. The masters and high officials of each were often notably bedizened, and garments distinguished the Sabbath from the week day as clearly as they distinguished the merchant from the shopkeeper. The rules and regulations by which wages and prices, and the amount of work to be done and holiday kept, and

the relations of the members of the Guild were fixed, were strictly enforced, and could only be infringed at the risk of heavy penalties. The boundaries between the trades were clearly laid down and rigidly observed. For the Middle Ages were riddled with Socialism, and this was a form of it. The Guild system resulted in an arbitrary and irritating enforcement of the division of labour, which finds its counterpart nowadays in the observances of the Trades Unions and several of the learned professions. The man who made a window-frame was a window-frame maker and might not insert the window-pane unless he had also qualified as a glazier. Only a locksmith was allowed to fix the casement to it, and it was a joiner's business and a joiner's only to embellish it with carving.

The position of the Bronze Workers in this hierarchy of trades does not appear to have been in any way exceptional. The usual tendency of son to succeed father in the trade, to labour first as youth and apprentice and then as master and married man, to work on in his father's shop and to live in his father's house is carried out in the case of the Vischer family. And thanks to this fact we can trace in the works of their house the development of native German art, passing from late Gothic, slightly influenced by Flemish realism, into the full flower of that German renaissance, which is not directly a "New Birth" of the art of old days, but only the second-hand influence of

[ST. SEBALD'S CHURCH, NÜRNBERG

2. PETER VISCHER THE CRAFTSMAN

that revival as reflected with a sudden and momentary brilliancy by the productions of German artists who had travelled in Italy and studied with profit Italian works.

On the expiration of his apprenticeship Peter Vischer would naturally, like other German youths, start on a period of travel—his *Wanderjahre.*

Whither he went we know not, but it is most probable that he turned his steps towards the Netherlands, where he could study the marvels of the new style of Flemish realism which had begun to exercise a potent influence upon the Nuremberg painters of his day.

But whether he reached the Netherlands or not of one thing we may be certain. Neither now nor at any subsequent period did he go to Italy.

It was indeed at one time thought and affirmed that he sojourned there once at least and perhaps twice. (*Sandrart, Teutscher Academie,* 1675.) But there is not one jot or tittle of evidence to support this theory, which was intended to supply us with the source whence he drew the inspiration for the second and third periods of his art.

After his Wanderjahre he returned to Nuremberg, and living in his father's house, in friendship with Adam Krafft, and in an atmosphere of late Gothic tradition permeated by Flemish realism, he entered upon the first period of his work, which ended, we may say, with the year 1507, and of which the Magdeburg Monument was the highest expression and achievement. Vischer was by

nature an idealist, and he quickly grew out of sympathy with the aims of the realistic school. But even in this tomb of Archbishop Ernst we can trace the influence exercised by Michel Wolgemut on the one hand, and of Martin Schön, through his copper-plates, on the other, as it is displayed in the striving after life and truth even at the expense of beauty, which is clearly noticeable in the figures, faces and heads of the apostles. The architecture and design, however, are cast in the late Gothic mould.

The works that belong to the second period of the Vischer foundry show a pure, plastic sense of form and rhythm emerging from the overwhelming dominion of late Gothic extravagance. The childish things of that style have been put away by the mature artist, and, in obedience to the teaching of the drawings of Jacopo de' Barbari, whom Dürer called "a lovable, good painter," and of the drawings of early Renaissance work in North Italy, which Peter the younger had made in his Wanderjahre there, the great masterpiece of the house, the Sebaldusgrab, takes shape in a style that is a curious mixture of the Mediæval and Renaissance manners.

Finally, when Hermann Vischer, Peter's eldest son, had made a journey to Rome and returned thence laden with drawings, father and sons gave themselves up to a whole-hearted worship of the beauty of form and an eager copying of the antique which resulted in the most beautiful piece of pure

Renaissance work which ever issued from a German workshop—the Rathaus Railing, destined to be sold in the fulness of years and melted down for the value of its metal!

The life of Peter Vischer was simple and domestic, but very full of toil and trouble and private grief made bearable perhaps by his absorbing enthusiasm for his work. A few years before his father's death, probably in 1485, he married Margaretha, daughter of Hans Gross. A document, dated October 4th, 1490, gives us a slight glimpse of her character. Therein her father records that he makes a present to his daughter of the green mantle and veil with which he had provided her on her wedding day, but at the same time he binds Peter Vischer with all the paraphernalia of judges, witnesses and solemn pledges not to allow her to sell or pawn the said articles. The date of this document led to the erroneous conclusion that the marriage only took place in 1489, but Dr. Seeger has recently pointed out that on a medallion by Peter Vischer the younger he expressly states that he was twenty-two years of age when he wrought it, and this in the year 1509. Since Neudörffer, the Nuremberg Vasari, refers to Hermann as "the famous Peter Vischer's *eldest* son," the marriage must have occurred somewhere about 1485. There was also a third son by this union, known afterwards as Hans der Giesser. Margaretha died shortly after the birth of this last son, and in 1493 we find Peter married again to Dorothea von

Gericht. She died soon afterwards, leaving him a daughter, Margaretha, and then he took to himself another Margaretha. Meantime he worked like his father at the town Foundry in the White Tower, and lived in the house he had inherited, "Am Sande." But in 1505 he moved to a house behind the Convent of St. Catherine, which had fallen to him by inheritance. On July 26th of that year he was chosen "Street Captain" (Gassenhauptman) of the Barfüsser or Franciscan quarter of the town, and in the following year he and Margaretha signed a legal document declaring that they had bought another house for 120 fl. Part of this house they pulled down and threw into a third adjoining one which they had also acquired. Thus they formed a single large foundry of their own and enjoyed possession of their own dwelling house next door. This house still stands in the street now called Peter Vischerstrasse. Two other sons came to him by this marriage, Jakob and Paul. Then in 1522 he was again left a widower and a widower he remained the last seven years of his life, although historians, concluding that he had formed an ineradicable habit of matrimony, have placed a fourth wife to his credit. Barbara they name her and say that she survived him. But as her name does not appear in the documents dealing with the partition of property immediately after his death it seems probable that they are thinking of Barbara, the wife of Peter Vischer the younger. For he and his

family were living in his father's house, and seeing that Hermann, the elder son, had died in 1516 and his wife, Ursula Mag, in 1514, it was natural that Barbara, on the death of the old man's third wife should take care of him and charge of his house. Peter the younger died in 1528, but Barbara and her six children would still live on beneath the paternal roof till the old Bronze-worker died in 1529. The famous foundry was inherited by her brother-in-law Paul, who sold it to his brother Hans, and Barbara, within a few months, found another husband in Jorg Schott, the goldsmith, and another home.[1]

Thus it will be seen that the life of Peter Vischer, although it was over-full of domestic bereavements, was, on the whole and apart from his work, the ordinary happy home life of the German citizen. He fulfilled his duties and had his successes as a burgher. For he was one of the *Genannten* of the Great Council both in 1516 and again in 1520. He was also appointed in 1506 to the Committee which was to consider the restoration of that extraordinary old clock in the Frauenkirche, known to young and old in Nuremberg as the "Männleinlaufen," the copper figures in which were cast by his friend Sebastien Lindenast.

For the rest he hardly ever left Nuremberg, and never for long or to go far. It has been one

[1] Seeger, "Peter Vischer der Jüngere."

of the difficulties of art criticism to explain how it came about, therefore, that this modest, stay-at-home burgher should have gone on all his life developing and adopting the new ideas and the recent revelations of Italian art, discarding the traditions in which he had been brought up, and finally learning the latest lesson of the Renaissance with such success that in his old age there came forth from his workshop the noblest work of German craftsmanship.

CHAPTER III

THE EARLY WORKS OF PETER VISCHER

PETER VISCHER was admitted as a Master of his Guild in 1489, shortly after his father's death. If, as is generally admitted, the monument of Count Otto IV. von Henneberg at Römhild is from his hand, we have in that rather limp, life-size picture of a knight in armour, holding an heraldic banner in his right hand and a sword in his left, the earliest example of Peter Vischer's work. And this figure, it is noticeable, is supported by a *stone* plate to which the arms and the inscription, in letters separately cast, are affixed. It is, then, a relic of those days when, just as painting was a parasite of carving and sculpture, bronze also was a handmaid of stone. It may be added that the demand for the products of Vischer's foundry was fated to be destroyed in the years to come by the new fashion for tombs in stone.

But the monument of Count Otto assuredly did not qualify Peter Vischer as a Meister in his craft. What his "masterpiece" was we cannot say with certainty, but it was very likely the

model which he completed in 1488 for the shrine of St. Sebald. This is the design which he was destined to take up twenty years later, and to execute in the fulness of his new knowledge and developed technique. It is now in Vienna, and betrays at every point the influence of Adam Krafft, to the style of whose Sacramentshaüslein it bears an obvious resemblance. Heideloff, the architect, in whose possession the model once was, attributed it indeed to Veit Stoss. But it is signed by Peter Vischer with his mark

Heideloff, it is true, claimed this as the token of Veit Stoss, but his opinion is of little value, for his enthusiasm for the Polish carver led him to claim for him amongst other works the design of the tomb of Archbishop Ernst, the Römhild memorials of Count Hermann VIII. and of Otto IV., and even the Imperial tomb of Maximilian at Innsbruck.

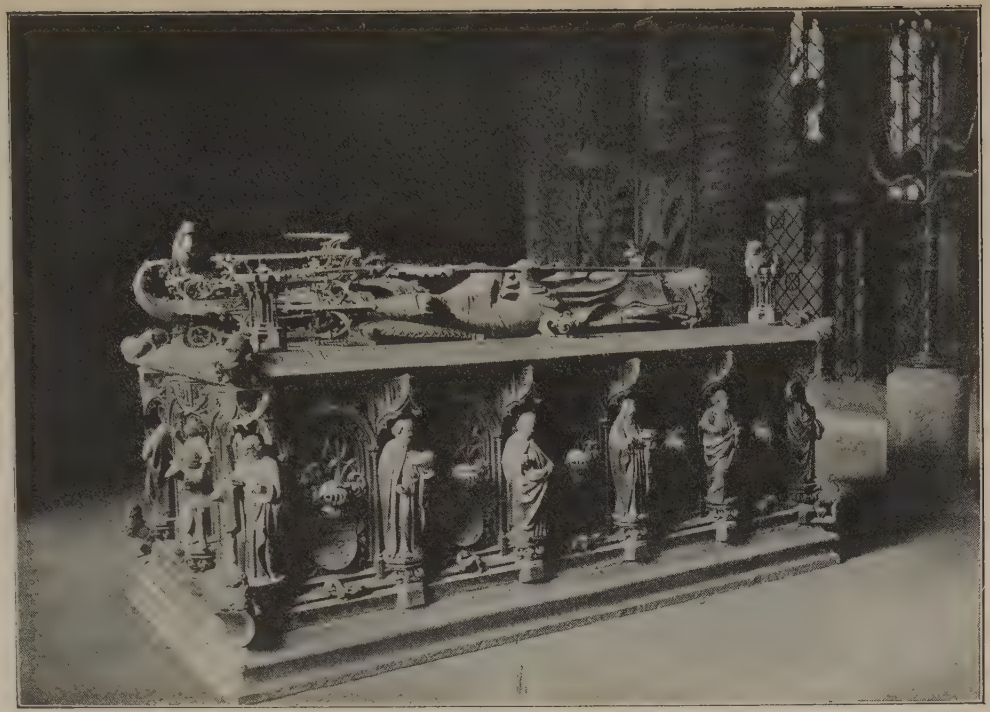
Of the original design for the Sebaldusgrab, Lübke says, "It is a masterpiece of Gothic construction but freely endowed with all the exaggeration and extravagance of the late period." And there can be no doubt that the world lost nothing by the delay which intervened before Peter Vischer, in the words of the chronicler, "with the help of his five sons, who were all married and lived for the most part with him in the house with

their wives and children, as I myself have seen," remodelled it and completed it at last on July 19, 1519.

After commencing Meister he continued to work for a while in the Gothic manner of his father and those about him. He received at this time two commissions worth sixty florins apiece, which he executed after the designs of others. The tomb of Bishop Heinrich III., Gross von Trockau, in Bamberg Cathedral (1492) is one of these. It is skilfully wrought in low relief. The bishop, in his episcopal garments, is conceived as standing on a lion, and a Gothic canopy is set over his head. In style it recalls the second commission referred to—the monument in the same cathedral of Bishop Georg II., Marshal von Ebenet, which was wrought by Vischer from a design by Wolf. Katzheimer.

By the year 1494 the Meister had already laid the foundations of the great reputation which was to be his. For, in company with Simon Lamberger, the wood-carver, he was summoned to Heidelberg by Philip, Elector of the Palatinate, who desired them to "serve him with their counsel and their handiwork." At the special request of the Nuremberg Council, so we are told,[1] they went; and they stayed there for a considerable space of time to work for the Elector. But of the work they performed at Heidelberg we know absolutely

[1] Baader.



STEIN PHOTO.] [CATHEDRAL, MAGDEBURG

3. TOMB OF ARCHBISHOP ERNST

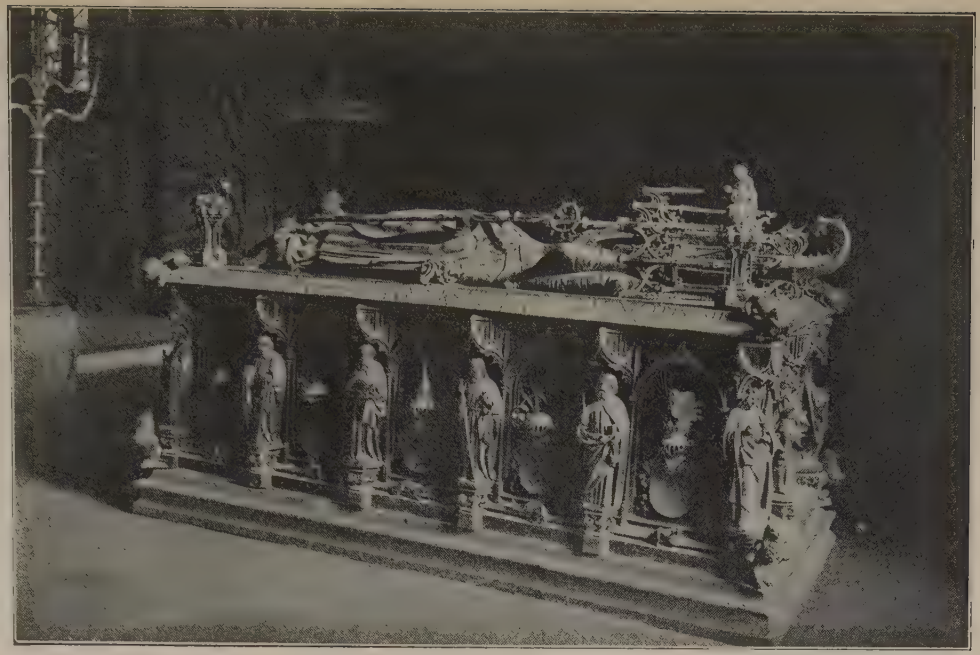
nothing. Peter Vischer was certainly back again in Nuremberg in 1496. For in that year he gave a full release ("aller Dinge quitt, ledig und los") to his friend Peter Harsdorffer the younger, in whose hands he had left the management of all his affairs during his absence. He returned, perhaps, to execute the important commissions he had received from the North. In the following year he completed the first great work of his life, in which his own individuality is for the first time apparent. For the tomb of Archbishop Ernst in the Cathedral at Magdeburg, is the first of Peter Vischer's masterpieces, and it affords the most important illustration of the early influences under which he worked. The statue of the Archbishop, who was a brother of John the Stable and Frederick the Wise, lies in high relief beneath a Gothic Canopy, which strongly recalls the famous Pyx then just completed by the artist's friend, Adam Krafft. The figure, which is represented in cope and mitre, rests on a stone Gothic base, as upon a bed of state, and holds in its hands a crosier and a Pontifical Cross. A pleasing Latin inscription round the monument informs us that "with whatever art the hands of the craftsman have wrought me, yet am I but dust, and contain the dust and all the earthly remains" of the great Archbishop, and it concludes with the prayer that his soul may rest in the consolation of light and peace. (Ills. 3 and 4.)

Ipse me vivus posuit, it is added. And indeed

this Child of Light was wise in his generation, and knowing that artists are rare, and that through their pen or brush alone can most men achieve an earthly immortality, the archbishop had ordered his tomb from Peter Vischer in 1494, though he himself did not die till 1513. He was not so foolish as to leave the matter to the care of ungrateful heirs like Browning's Bishop who ordered his tomb in St. Praxed's Church. The date on the tombstone, which is the date of the setting up thereof, is variously interpreted 1495 and 1497. But all Peter Vischer's 5's are quite unlike the final figure in this inscription, although many perceive in it a 5 after the manner of the Arabic lettering of those days. Moreover Vischer was in Heidelberg in 1494, and only returned to Nuremberg to stay in 1496. Only at Nuremberg can he have had the appliances necessary for so elaborate a work, and, even if he paid a flying visit there before '96, he had not sufficient time to complete his task by 1495. There is yet another reason for putting the date of the Magdeburg monument as late as possible, and that is its amazing superiority to the Breslau tomb of Bishop John IV., the setting up of which Peter Vischer himself personally superintended in 1496. The latter monument is so inferior in style and treatment that it is incredible that the artist, after having made such an advance as is exhibited in the Magdeburg memorial, should have gone back in the following year to so hard, forced and yet

feeble a handling of form. If this Breslau tomb is indeed later than the other it must be the work of an apprentice, who has endeavoured to imitate the idea of the Magdeburg masterpiece, and very lamentably failed in his endeavour. The decorative work, however, is very much more successful than the treatment of the figures, of which the drapery still completely hides the anatomy and still falls in stiff and angular folds.

But to return to the tomb of Archbishop Ernst. The artist has adopted that late Gothic style which was apt to lead to so much that was weak, trivial and ineffective. But there is here nothing that is excessive or disproportionate. Even in the case of the canopy above the head of the reclining Bishop, if we concede the permissibility of its presence at all, we must also confess that there is an artistic reason for its existence in the fact that it furnishes the top which one feels to be required for the monument. As to the recumbent form itself, it is, in the strength of its treatment and the individuality of its portraiture, conceived after the realistic manner of the day. But Vischer has not been betrayed into any excess in this direction. Only it is evident that the influence of that striving after the impressions of life as the artist sees it, which has been called Realism, and which yet leaves room for so much that is ideal, has been working strongly within him. The broad, heavy folds of drapery falling straight or almost straight down the bodies of the Bishop and the Apostles



STEIN PHOTO.] [CATHEDRAL, MAGDEBURG

4. TOMB OF ARCHBISHOP ERNST

speak also to the same conclusion. For statuettes of the Twelve Apostles, ranged on either side of the tomb, stand on pedestals, enriched with deep foliage, and beneath beautiful canopies, intricately wrought in the Gothic style. They are the forerunners of those superb figures on the Sebaldusgrab, but their pose is very monotonous, and in their undersize they recall the works of Adam Krafft, which reflect the short and dumpy type of the contemporary Nuremberger. A tendency to exaggerate the size of the head may be noticed. Possibly it is the result of the artist's endeavour to express the individuality of the Apostles he represented. But this defect is reproduced in the Angel set at the head of the Archbishop.

A noticeable figure on this tomb is the St. Maurice at the head of it corresponding to the St. Stephen at the foot. This is a veritable Nuremberg type, and reminds us of the statuette of the same Saint now preserved in the Court of Krafft's House (No. 7 Theresienstrasse) at Nuremberg. It is a fountain-figure, and was originally gilded. Doubt has been cast on the authorship of this piece, but cannot be seriously entertained after a comparison with the St. Maurice at Magdeburg. (Ill. 5.)

The tomb throughout is wrought richly and with the minutest care. On the base Peter Vischer seizes the opportunity of indulging his humour and luxuriant imagination. He has added fantastic dogs and beasts of various kinds, in the same

STEIN PHOTO.] [KRAFFT HOUSE, NÜRNBERG

5. ST. MAURICE

spirit, perhaps, as that in which Dürer used to adorn and complete his engravings and even to crowd the vacant spaces of his compositions with the *Traumwerk* with which his mind and memory were stored. And in this respect also the Magdeburg tomb foreshadows the Sebaldusgrab.

At the four corners are four lions bearing arms; above are four others poised in the manner of gargoyles on some Gothic building; whilst on the top, at each corner, standing on groups of Gothic pilasters are, or rather were, the symbols of the four Evangelists; for the eagle has been broken off and has disappeared now from its base.

During the next few years (1497-1508) many works were turned out of the Vischer Foundry; several of which were based on the designs of other artists, most probably at the request of the patron. Some of those which we can identify as coming from Vischer's workshop in this fashion, such as the monument of Bishop Georg II. of Bamberg, which was executed after the design by Wolfgang Katzheimer, the Bamberg painter, or the monuments of Bishop Veit and Heinrich III. are of absolutely no interest to the student of Peter Vischer's art.

But two monuments, this time of temporal princes, which belong to the same period, have a greater interest and a higher merit. They are the memorials of Count Eitel Friedrich II. von Hohenzollern in the parish church of Hechingen (1500), and of Count Hermann VIII., at Römhild.

STEIN PHOTO.] [CHURCH, RÖMHILD

6. MONUMENT OF COUNT HERMANN VIII

(Ill. 6.) No one who has familiarized himself with the master's manner will fail to perceive that, if these monuments have been executed by him in bronze, they have no less certainly been based upon the design of another hand. And no one who has studied the drawings of Albert Dürer, and who now compares these knightly figures, for instance, with some of those mail-clad forms of his, whether it be Lucas Baumgärtner or another, will be astonished to learn that Bergau has discovered and published that design, and that it proves to be indeed by Dürer. For that pen-and-ink drawing now at Florence, that sketch of the tall, thin knight, who is standing on a lion in a position that is, it must be confessed, both straddling and constrained, and who is apparently speaking to his wife, whose feet are set, according to the convention, upon a dog, the symbol of fidelity, is undeniably the first sketch for the tomb of Count Eitel and his wife Magdalena, Countess of Brandenburg, which is now to be found in the parish church of Hechingen. Certain very obvious variations have, however, been introduced, whether by the designer in a second sketch, or, as is most probable, by the bronze-worker on his own initiative. The figures, which in the original are excessively separate, have been brought closer together, and thereby, whilst the lion and dog on which they stand have suffered, an opportunity for the development of the background has been provided. A trace of this process is observable also

in the position of the Count's right elbow, which protrudes to the extreme outside edge of the frame. The left hand, holding a rosary, is another innovation, but it is not one for which in its execution any gain in grace can be claimed. Other minor alterations, also, may be remarked, as in the drapery and in the pose of the Countess, which is beautiful and Vischer-like. The substitution of the three coats-of-arms for the late Gothic work in Dürer's sketch is noteworthy.

Unfortunately, as Lübke points out, this monument has not come down to us complete. Originally it was a *Freigrab* resting on lions, and the sides of it were richly decorated. Angels are said to have stood at the four corners, some of them supporting candlesticks and others coats-of-arms. But in this instance, as in a later and still more regrettable one, the craftsman was destined to suffer from the greed inspired by the value of the material in which he wrought. For, in 1782, portions of this tomb were melted down, and twenty-two new candlesticks for the church were cast out of the nearly one thousand pounds of metal resulting. The date of the tomb is fixed approximately by the death of the Countess, which occurred in 1496. The Count himself died in 1512, and he probably ordered the monument soon after his wife's death. It bears the date MCCCCC.

Elizabeth, sister of the Countess Magdalena, daughter of Prince Albert Achilles, of Brandenburg,

had married Count Hermann VIII. of Henneberg, and it is doubtless due to this relationship that the double tomb of husband and wife at Römhild was made from the same sketch and by the same craftsman as the memorial at Hechingen. It was indeed probably the earlier of the two. So at least Bergau argues, from the fact that it is nearer to the original sketch by Dürer. The Count, in this version of the design, holds a banner, the floating folds of which form an efficient background. The drapery of the Countess instead of being gathered up into her hands is caught up to her sides in graceful flowing folds.

Peter Vischer knew how to make a thrifty use of accomplished models. Here, as originally at Hechingen, he repeated the symbols of the four Evangelists which he had used for his Magdeburg masterpiece. The tomb stands upon six vigorous and life-like lions, and, says Lübke, among the various saints who are ranged round the sarcophagus is a Madonna pressing to her breast the Holy Child, who is turning with a quick and very natural movement towards the eldest of the three kings who bring gifts. These are all figures quite in the best manner of Peter Vischer's early style. And several of the other saints are almost equally good. As usual the details are worked with admirable skill.

The following letters are engraved on this tomb : M. F. W. S. 15 C. Döbner was inspired to interpret them thus: "Meister Fischer und Fünf

Söhne"; and again with a second effort: "Meister Fischer Waage Sebaldi 15 Centner." These interpretations, I suppose, carry with them their own refutation. They do not encourage one to make a third attempt.

CHAPTER IV

THE SHRINE OF ST. SEBALD

"In the Church of Sainted Sebald sleeps enshrined his holy dust,
And in bronze the Twelve Apostles guard from age to age their trust."—LONGFELLOW.

THE Magdeburg monument, whilst it bears obvious traces of the influence of his father Hermann, of the school of Wolgemut, and of Adam Krafft upon the art of Peter Vischer, is an eloquent testimony also to the rapid development which was taking place in the mind and ideas of this eager craftsman. We have now reached the period when the ideals and the lessons of the Renaissance begin to master his imagination and to permeate his art to such a degree and with such success that the work which was next commissioned from him proves to be the first and greatest of Renaissance works in Germany. The shrine of St. Sebald reflects the history of the artist's mind. Upon a Gothic base and foundation the spirit of Renaissance detail has overwhelmingly impressed itself. Before we consider this work more closely it will be as well to state the sources whence our Núrem-

berg craftsman drew his new inspirations. How did he learn his lessons in Italian art?

In the first place it would seem probable that Jacopo de' Barbari lived for some time in Nuremberg during the last years of the fifteenth century. It is at any rate certain that the influence exerted by his drawings upon the Nuremberg artists was strong and lasting. Further, it was only natural that Nuremberg, lying as it did on the direct trade route from east to north, should be in close communication with Venice and the great towns of Northern Italy. Venetians came to Nuremberg; Nuremberg traders and artists, like Dürer, in their Wanderjahre, went to Venice and returned laden with the fruits of their Italian studies, and copies of the works of Italian masters. The Patrician youths of Nuremberg, also, would naturally sojourn at the Italian Universities at Padua, Bologna, and elsewhere, and they would bring home with them Italian books and wood-cuts, examples of the copper-plates of Jacopo de' Barbari and of the works of Andrea Sansovino.

But we seek for a more direct and personal source of contact to explain the intimate enthusiasm for Italian art displayed by Peter Vischer. And the secret of this source, which had remained hitherto undiscovered, has recently been made public by the elaborate researches of Dr. Georg Seeger.[1]

[1] "Peter Vischer der Jüngere." Leipzig, 1897.

Peter Vischer's second son and namesake, he reminds us, is mentioned pointedly by the chroniclers in one passage[1] as having done the greater part of the work on the Sebaldusgrab, "for he excelled his father and brother in art"; and in another[2] as having "taken his pleasure in reading the Poets and Historians, whence he then, with the aid of Pancratz Schwenter, extracted many beautiful poems and illuminated them. He was in all things not less accomplished and skilful than his aforesaid brother Hermann, and he too died in his prime." Now this young craftsman, it would appear, when the period of his "wandering" was at hand, turned his feet, like his fellow-townsman Dürer before him, towards Lombardy, "the Paradise of all arts." His imagination, doubtless, had already been fired by what he had seen of the North Italian Renaissance in the treasures brought to Nuremberg by merchants, travellers and artists. But the expenses of an Italian tour were beyond the resources of the Vischer household. Fortune and his father's friends were kind to him; he was entrusted, probably through the influence of Sebald Schreyer, the historian and patron of art, with the task of "travelling" the famous *Schedel-Weltchronik*, which had been published in 1492, with illustrations by Wolgemut and Pleydenwurff. Booksellers' accounts enable us to trace the journey of the young craftsman. He passed through

[1] Kunz Rösner. MS. 933 b, Library, Nuremberg.
[2] Neudörffer.

Como, where the façade of the cathedral, at that time in course of construction, had many a lesson in the Early Renaissance style to teach him, and he came to Milan, the metropolis of Northern Italy. There he sold one hundred and ninety-one copies of the book, and in the intervals of business he occupied himself with the study of the drawings of Leonardo da Vinci, from which, like many another artist since, he learnt his first lessons in anatomy and proportion. There also he may have acquired the art of medallion and plaquette work, for it was about this time that he produced the first medallion which comes from the hand of a German craftsman—the portrait of his brother Hermann, dated 1507. From Milan he went south. He visited the Certosa of Pavia, and he filled his sketch book with drawings from the façade of that luxuriant example of the Early North Italian Renaissance. He studied with especial care the figure of his patron saint, and afterwards he reproduced it in the St. Peter of the Sebaldusgrab. Thence he passed to Genoa, where he sold more books and studied, perhaps, the marble Madonna of Andrea Sansovino. And so home, in 1508, by way of Verona and Venice. Inspired by what he had seen, he brought new life and inspiration to the workshop at Nuremberg. The result of his journey was that he passed completely under the influence of Italian art; he was filled with that untrammelled revelling in existence and that unalloyed worship of the beautiful which is the key-

note of the Renaissance. He had learnt the value of the study of the nude, and he had seen, as every artist must see, the superiority of the Italian over the Bavarian model. Hereafter the tendency to discard the short and sturdy types of the school of Krafft, and to substitute more slender and more beautiful figures for the Apostles is marked. The results of this Italian journey of his are clearly discernible not only in the Sebaldusgrab, but also in his own particular works, in the two medallions of his brother Hermann, executed in 1507 and 1511; and in that of himself in 1509; in the beautiful plaquettes, "Orpheus and Eurydice"; in the two inkstands and the ornamentation of the tomb of Frederick the Wise in Wittenberg, with which we shall presently deal.

Remembering that picture of the father spending his holidays in drawing with his friends Lindenast and Krafft, it is easy to imagine that the old man, ever young, enthusiastic, humble and eager to learn, readily appreciated and welcomed the revelations contained in the son's sketch books. He was already at work upon a Gothic shrine for St. Sebald's remains, but he soon modified his original plan, improving and enriching it by the light of this new learning.

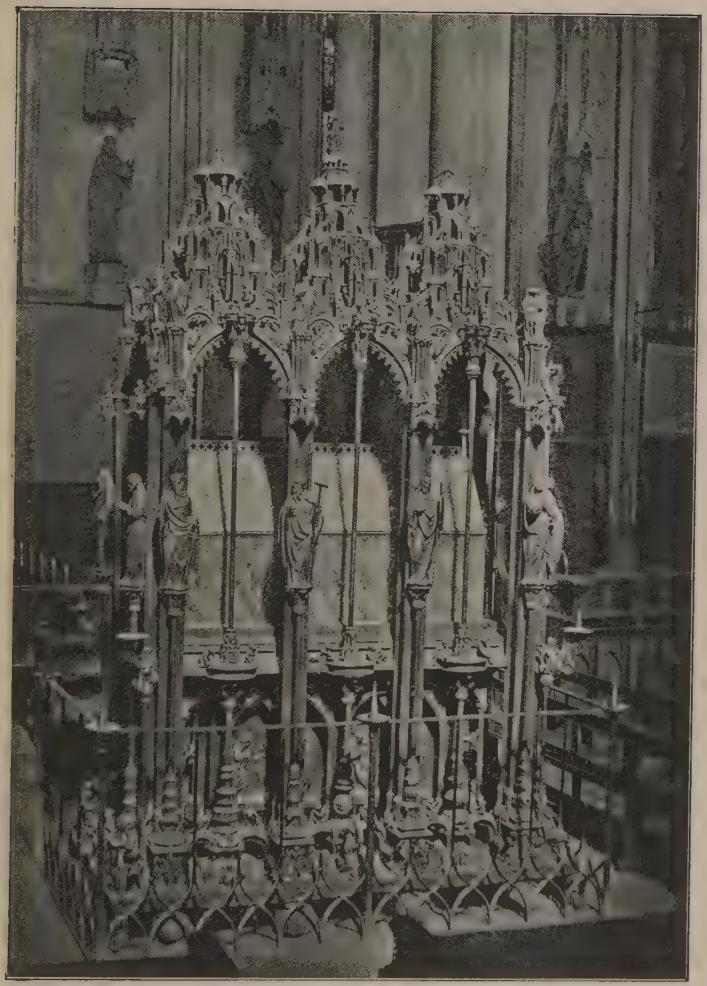
Ere the fires of that inspiration had yet begun to grow cold, and before the Sebaldusgrab was more than half finished, another member of the family took yet another journey. Hermann, the eldest son, had married Ursula Mag in November

of the year 1513. "When his wife left him in death," Neudörffer tells us, "he went for art's sake and at his own cost to Rome, and brought back with him much artistic material which he had sketched there, and which greatly pleased his father and served as good practice for his brothers." Hermann himself died shortly after his return, in the year 1516. He was run over by a sleigh in St. Gilgen-strasse one night as he was returning to his home in the Kornmarkt from the house of his friend Wolfgang Traut, the painter, and thus "perished in his prime, in sad and piteous wise." But that journey of his had not been taken in vain. His drawings revealed to the old burgher at home the further developments of art and some of the wonders of the full Florentine-Roman Renaissance. The result can be traced in some of the figures on the Sebaldusgrab, and, later, in that complete acceptance of the revival of the antique which is expressed in the Rathaus Railing.

The idea of a shrine to contain the relics of St. Sebald had long been in contemplation, as is proved by the existence of Vischer's early model. But funds lacked, and it was not till a robbery was committed in the Church in 1506, that a Society of Patricians and of the most important men in the town was formed to consider and provide for the carrying out of the long delayed plan. Men of wealth and learning, piety and taste, like Sebald Schreyer, the devoted Sacristan of the church, Anton Tucher, Peter Imhof and

Lazarus Holzschuher formed a committee and took an active part in subscribing and collecting money for the purpose. A spirit of generous rivalry with those of the Saint Laurence quarter, whose church, thanks to the piety of Hans Imhof, had been adorned by the beautiful Pyx wrought by Adam Krafft, stimulated their zeal. They subscribed and collected with such success that in the same year (1507) the commission was given to Peter Vischer. Two thousand gulden was the proposed cost, and twenty gulden were allowed the Meister for every hundred-weight of completed work, "as in the case of the monuments in the Cathedral at Bamberg." A payment of 100 gulden was made to him on June 5, 1507. His darling plan was, then, at last to be realized. Vischer threw himself into his work with an enthusiasm only equalled by his energy. For twelve years he with his five sons laboured, though their labour was often interrupted by want of funds. Private subscriptions failed to supply the cost even of the 157 cwt. of metal used. At last, when, in 1519, Anton Tucher in moving words had told the citizens that they ought to subscribe the 800 gulden still needed "for the glory of God and His Holy Saint," the money was forthcoming. The monument was completed and the final payment for it made to Vischer three years later. Elsewhere I have thus described it.

"On the base of the shrine the Master inscribed in his favourite Gothic characters the following



STEIN PHOTO.] [ST. SEBALD'S CHURCH, NÜRNBERG

7. THE SHRINE OF ST. SEBALD

legend :—'Peter Vischer Bürger in Nürnberg machet dieses Werk, mit seinen Söhnen, ward vollbracht im Jahr, 1519. Ist allein Gott dem allmächtigen zu lob und St. Sebald dem Himmelsfürsten zu ehren, mit Hülf andächtiger Leut von dem Almosen bezahlt.'

"That is the keynote of this wonderful structure. Through years of difficulty and distress the pious artist had toiled and struggled on with the help of pious persons, paid by their voluntary contributions, to complete a work "to the praise of God Almighty alone and the honour of St. Sebald.' No word, one feels, can add to the simple dignity and faith of that inscription. It supplies us with the motive of the work, and it supplies us also with the true interpretation of the various groups and figures which form the shrine. To the glory of God,—we are shown how all the world, all nature and her products, all paganism with its heroic deeds and natural virtues, the Old Dispensation with its prophets and lawgivers, and the New, with its apostles and saints, pay homage to the Infant Christ, the guardian genius bringing salvation, who, enthroned on the summit of the central cupola, holds in his hands the terrestrial globe. To the honour of St. Sebald,—the miniature Gothic Chapel enshrines beneath its richly fretted canopy, fifteen feet high, the oaken coffer encased in beaten plates of gold and silver in which lie the bones of St. Sebald; and below this sarcophagus, which dates from 1397, are admirable

bas-reliefs representing scenes and miracles from the life of the Saint.

"Around the substructure of the tomb rise eight slender piers, bearing eight foliated arches, which, in turn, support three perforated cupolas enriched with pillared and arched buttresses. In the centre of these arches are placed richly ornamented candlesticks, with candles of bronze, and these also serve as supports and run out into leafy chalices on which graceful children play and swing. The bases of the eight slender pillars are formed by all sorts of strange figures and creatures suggestive of the world of pagan mythology, gods of the forest and of the sea, nymphs of the water and the wood. Between them are some lions couchant which recall to the memory Wolgemut's Peringsdörffer altarpiece. At the four corners are real candlesticks held by the most graceful and seductive winged mermaids, with fish-tails and taloned feet, about whom serpents twine. But the most famous and the most beautiful figures are those of the twelve apostles, which stand, each about two feet high, under delicate canopies, on shafts of the piers already mentioned. Clad in graceful, flowing robes, their expression and whole attitude eloquent both of vigour and of tranquil dignity, these statues are wholly admirable. What sculpture or painting could convey to a higher degree the sense of the intellectual and moral beauty and strength which centred in these first followers of Christ? This

STEIN PHOTO.]

[ST. SEBALD'S CHURCH, NÜRNBERG

8. ST. PETER

characteristic pervades them all, but the unity of suggestion is conveyed through a variety of individualities and of pose. Each Apostle stands forth distinct in the vigour of his own inspired personality. (Ill. 8 and 9.)

"Above the apostles are set the Fathers of the Church, or it may be, the twelve minor prophets. Beneath them, on the western end of the substructure is a noble statue of St. Sebald, who holds in his hand a model of the church called after his name, and at the corresponding place on the other end that statue of Peter Vischer himself, to which we have already referred. Here, in large Latin characters we find the inscription 'Ein Anfang durch mich' (a beginning by me) 'Peter Vischer, 1508,' and under St. Sebald the record of the completion of the base: 'Gemacht von Peter Vischer, 1509.'

STEIN PHOTO.] [ST. SEBALD'S CHURCH, NÜRNBERG

9. ST. SEBALD

"On the base, at the foot of the four corner pillars, are the nude figures of Nimrod with his bow and quiver, of Samson with the slaughtered

lion and the jawbone of an ass, Perseus with sword and shield and in company of a mouse, Hercules with a club. Between these heroes, in the centre of either side, are female figures emblematic of the four cardinal virtues of mankind—Strength in a coat of mail with a lion, Temperance with a bowl and globe, Wisdom with mirror and book, and Justice with sword and scales. In all, besides the apostles and prophets, there are seventy-two figures, in the presentation of which amidst flowers and foliage the joyful, exuberant fancy of the artist and his helpers has run riot. But there is, as I have suggested, a well-conceived plan and unity throughout; an intimate correspondence, in spite of the variety of groups, between the parts and the whole. Everything is subordinated to the two central ideas which animate the whole, and everything executed with a delicacy of feeling and a fineness of finish little short of marvellous. The whole fabric rests upon twelve large snails, with four dolphins at the corners."

The bronze is, apparently, just as it left the mould. It has not been filed and chiselled and smoothed and polished after the modern fashion, and it has therefore lost nothing of the vigour and character of the lines as they were originally shaped by the craftsmen's hands. The very roughnesses are commendable.

When Peter Vischer received the commission to produce this great memorial of the municipal Saint the lines on which it should be wrought were

marked out for him by the traditions of his house and of his art. The sarcophagus should be placed, according to his old design, upon a base adorned with reliefs illustrating the miracles of the Saint: figures of apostles should guard the coffin, and above it should rise a canopy of lofty fretted Gothic pinnacles. Now this original design was for a shrine intended to be over forty feet high, and something after the manner of Adam Krafft's Pyx. On this, or rather on some slight modification of it, he began to work, and, as he went on, introduced very important alterations under the influence of his sons' new knowledge. It is due to this process of modification probably that we have to pass the criticism on the Sebaldusgrab that the parts are greater than the whole, though the beauty and finish of the details are so great that, once we are within range of their charm, we forget and forgive any fault in the proportionment of the complete structure. Beginning with the base, most likely at that end where the statue of himself in his leather apron is to be seen, and where the inscription "Beginning by me, 1508," may be read, Vischer made such good progress with the work that by 1512 Cocleus could write of it in his *Cosmographia* with amiable exaggeration;—"Quis vero solertior Petro Fischer in celandis fundendisque metallis? Vidi ego totum sacellum ab eo in aes fusum imaginibusque celatum, in quo multi sane mortales stare missamque audire poterunt." (What more skilful founder is there than Peter Vischer? I my-

self have seen a whole chapel cast by him in bronze and covered with statues, wherein indeed many people will be able to stand and hear mass.) The chapel then and many of the figures were completed or nearly completed by that date.

The alteration of the design to that of this single separate chapel containing the sarcophagus was doubtless due to the journey of Peter Vischer the younger and the examples of Italian tombs, which he had observed, for instance, in the Certosa and in the Cathedral of Pavia. In every part we notice how the Gothic skeleton has been modified or has been clothed with all kinds of decoration in the Renaissance style. The Gothic pillars, indeed, are retained, and the pilasters; but these are richly ornamented. Cupolas, too, have taken the place of the fretted Gothic pinnacles, but yet in the details of their construction, in their flying buttresses and arched openings, the original Gothic design has clearly been used and fused with the new Renaissance models, yielding that architectural effect of mixed Romanesque and Gothic styles, of which Cologne and Mainz afford, among many, the most obvious examples.

The figures of beasts and children found in the original are retained but changed. They are executed in the full spirit of the Renaissance, looking back to mythology. We have Cupids now and Genii, Tritons and Sirens, and in place of the Gothic crab the Renaissance dolphin. The ornamentation of the candlesticks is completely Italian-

ate. The slender, graceful columns which hold the candelabra are decorated now with a continually varying luxuriance of ornament, recalling in form a hundred details at Como, at Bergamo and at the Certosa of Pavia. In the case of the mythological figures there is no caricature; there are none of the monstrosities in which German art usually revelled when dealing with such subjects. The artist has gone straight to Italy, to the source of the new springs of knowledge and of the new-born delight in the gods of old days. There is, too, an inexhaustible fecundity of pose. Scarce one beast or child is the same. You might almost suppose that the artist had aimed at giving us an encyclopædia of Nature, showing that all-embracing enthusiasm which rendered so many of the great minds of the Renaissance eager to excel in every department of knowledge. Each minutest figure also displays a masterly grip of anatomy, proportion and perspective, and here we clearly recognize the student of Leonardo da Vinci's drawings. The figures of the four heroes and of the lute-player are of the school of Leonardo in pose, in modelling and in drapery, whilst the Marsyas may be traced, as Seeger thinks, to a woodcut in a Venetian edition of Ovid's Metamorphoses (1497).

The soft, transparent handling of the drapery is, generally speaking, wholly un-German. For, until the epoch roughly marked for us by the great *Adam and Eve* of Albert Dürer, the study

of the nude played but a small part in the labours of the German artists, and they did not trust themselves to use drapery as a means of revealing the form beneath. Their study of anatomy had so far been concentrated upon heads and hands and feet, and they treated drapery with exceeding care both as an aim and object in itself, and, more than a little, as a useful screen for defective bodies. But they were beginning to appreciate now the endeavours of a Jacopo de' Barbari to reveal the nude form through the drapery of his figures. And to achieve this end Vischer, like Dürer, had realised that a study of anatomy and the careful drawing of the contours of the body are necessary. In some cases the drapery of the female figures, as, for instance, of those in the relief which illustrates the miracle of the "Icicles," directly suggests the manner of Barbari, but in the miracle of the "Healing of the Blind Man" the artist has modelled his work on the antique. Thus he has taken the further step of the Italians who, after struggling to reproduce the perfections of the human body, and recognizing how far short of classic art they fell, had turned to regenerate the antique, and so gave rise to the true Renaissance which is the new birth of the old.

Between one pair of the four reliefs dealing with the miracles of St. Sebald and the other there is so marked a difference in manner and style that I do not think we can be far wrong if we attribute, with Seeger, that of the "Icicles"

and the "Healing of the Blind Man" to Peter Vischer the younger, and the others, especially and certainly that of the "Punishment of the Unbeliever" to his father. The particular point which strikes one as most admirable, and which is in greater or less degree common to all of them, is the simplicity of the grouping and the avoidance of that sin of overcrowding which beset so many artists of the day. (Ill. 10 and 11.)

The miracles of St. Sebald which were chosen as subjects for these reliefs are, briefly, the following. St. Sebald was the son of a Danish king who had renounced the things of this world in favour of the chaste and solitary life of a hermit. He afterwards made his way to Rome and was sent forth thence by Pope Gregory the Second to preach the Gospel in Germany. On his way he abode for a while at Vicenza, and there one day he received a visitor for whom he ordered his disciple Dionis to bring the pitcher of wine. Dionis hesitated, for he had allowed himself to partake of the wine the night before, and he feared detection. But when the order was repeated he went to fetch the pitcher, and behold, he found it filled again to the brim.

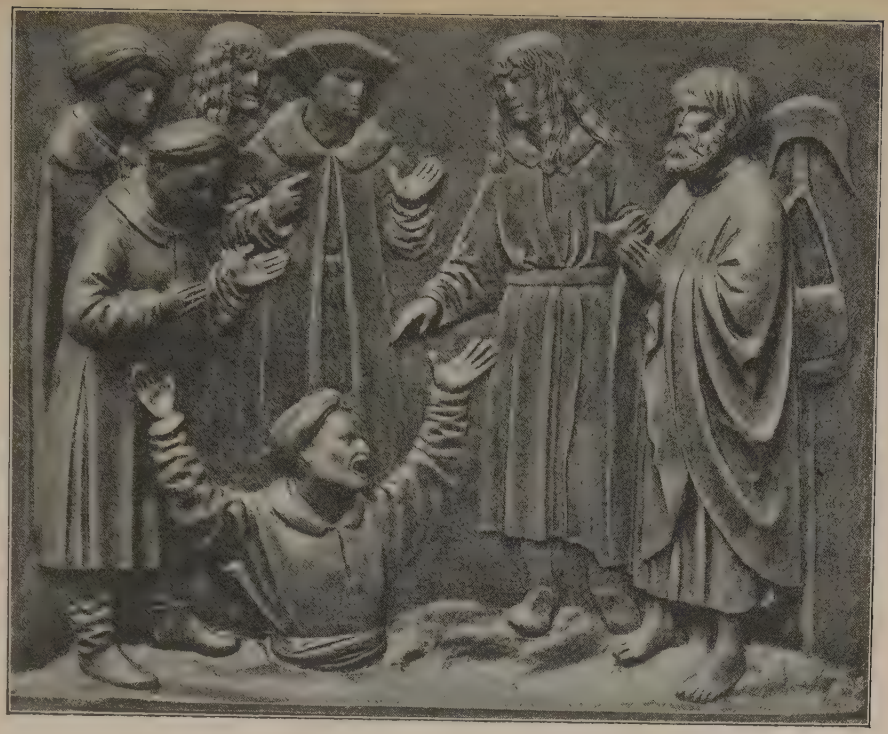
The fame of the hermit spread abroad. From far and near, even from Milan and Pavia, people flocked to hear from his lips the wonderful works of God. But amongst those who came, came also an unbeliever, who scoffed and blasphemed at the prophet and his message. Then Sebald

prayed to God that a sign might be given to prove his doctrine true, and immediately, in the sight of all, the earth opened and the scoffer sank up to his neck. Then the hermit prayed with a loud voice and interceded for him, so that he was delivered, and he and many of the unbelievers embraced the true faith. (Ill. 10.)

Sebald now left Italy and came at last to Nuremberg. He settled there in the forest in the heart of the Franconian people, teaching them the word of God and working miracles. On one occasion we are told he sought shelter in the hut of a poor and churlish waggoner. It was winter: the snow lay on the ground and the wind howled over the frozen marshes of the Pegnitz. But the signs of charity did not shine brightly in the host. Sebald called upon the man's wife to bring more wood for the fire so that he might warm his body, for he was chilled to the bone. But though he repeated his request the niggard host forbade his wife to obey. At length the saint cried out to her to bring the cluster of icicles which hung from the roof and to put them on the fire if she could not or would not bring the faggots.

The woman, pitying him, obeyed, and, in answer to the prayer of Sebald, a flame shot up from the ice as from a firebrand and the whole bundle was quickly ablaze.

When he saw this miracle the chilly host gave the hermit a warmer welcome, and, to make amends



STEIN PHOTO.]

[RELIEF FROM THE SEBALDUSGRAB, ST. SEBALD'S CHURCH, NÜRNBERG

10. ST. SEBALD PUNISHES AN UNBELIEVER

for his former lack of hospitality, he sallied forth to buy some fish in the market, contrary to the regulations of the authorities. Being caught he was blinded, but the holy hermit quickly restored to him the light of his eyes. (Ill. 11.)

So potent was the saint on whose shrine Peter Vischer was now at work—that shrine to which, says Eobanus Hessus in his poem on Nuremberg, no words can do justice and with which not even the greatest artists of antiquity could have found fault:

> "Musa nec ulla queat tanto satis esse labori
> Nec verbis æquare opus immortale futurum;
> Quod neque Praxiteles, nec Myron nec Polycletus,
> Nemo Cares, nemo Scopas reprehendere posset."

Now in the style of the reliefs which record the miracles we have related, there is a marked divergence. Even the figure of the saint is not uniformly conceived. We may conclude that we have on the one hand in the "Punishment of the Unbeliever" undoubtedly the work of Peter Vischer, the father. The craftsman was still clearly under the influence of Adam Krafft and his school. For the personages of the little drama which he wished to depict are presented to us as simple Nurembergers of every day, and they are portrayed in a spirit of very homely realism. Similar in style is the treatment of the miracle of the "Wine in the Bowl," where, equally with the above, the handling of the drapery is thoroughly in the manner of the old Founder. On the other hand, the relief which re-

STEIN PHOTO.]

[RELIEF FROM SEBALDUSGRAB, ST. SEBALD'S CHURCH, NÜRNBERG

11. ST. SEBALD HEALING THE BLIND MAN

presents the "Miracle of the Icicles" is probably by Peter Vischer the younger. For the modelling of the female figures there distinctly reminds us, in drapery and in pose of the head and body, of the Eurydice in his "Orpheus and Eurydice," of the Vita in his inkstands, and of the flute-player in the Sebaldusgrab. And by him, also, is the "Healing of the Blind Man," which is by far the finest of the four reliefs. There is a movement in the whole and a unity in the composition quite admirable, whilst the cautious, tentative gait of the suddenly blinded man, not yet accustomed to the eternal darkness which has come upon him, is indicated with a delicacy and sureness of touch which proclaim a truly great and original artist. In the treatment of the drapery on the moving figures we read the result of his study of the antique. It is used to indicate and to explain the movement that is taking place. And very noticeable is the seizing of the dramatic moment, which is a conspicuous characteristic of the artist of "Orpheus and Eurydice."

In the portrayal of the apostles on the Sebaldusgrab Vischer and his sons have attained the perfect expression of the ideal after which the father had vainly striven in the monument at Magdeburg.

In every way the advance made by the artist since he wrought that early masterpiece is noticeable. The apostles here, unlike those in the original design, and unlike, also, those on the tomb

STEIN PHOTO.] [ST. SEBALD'S CHURCH, NÜRNBERG

12. ST. PAUL

of Archbishop Ernst, are not standing gazing straight in front of them in holy, unconscious calm, but a certain relation has been established between some of the pairs. That relation has not been established indeed with mathematical precision, but with an art that succeeds in producing the effect of nature. Take, for instance, the figures of Paul and Philip, which are represented in the act of earnest conversation, or those of Thomas and James the Less, which suggest men who are busy with their own thoughts, but are composed so as to be in complete harmony with those of the neighbouring apostles. The figures are skilfully arranged also so as to produce a harmonious contrast with the twelve patriarchs above them.

We noticed in the apostles of the Magdeburg monument a distinct lack of variety in pose, especially of arms and hands. The figures there were stiff and lacking in grace, but these are full of fire and movement. The figures there were over short. They were the types of Adam Krafft and the Nuremberg school. But these, in greater or less degree, are Renaissance types of comparative litheness, and inspired with life and intelligence.

In breaking away from the traditions of Veit Stoss and Adam Krafft the artist has advanced to a notable extent beyond them, and even beyond Dürer in most cases, in the quality of spirituality which he has learnt to impress upon his work.

A similar development is noticeable in the drap-

STEIN PHOTO.] [ST. SEBALD'S CHURCH, NÜRNBERG

13. ST. BARTHOLOMEW

ery. The apostles at Magdeburg are clad in the heavy, wooden garments of the old school, whilst those of the Sebaldusgrab are draped in fine folds which fall in soft curves over bodies anatomically correct.

We cannot, perhaps, determine with certainty which of the Vischer family is responsible for each figure. But where we find one recalling in pose and drapery the motives of the Magdeburg tomb we may safely attribute it to the father. He was fond of horizontal folds and much affected that motive of a mantle which consists in its being thrown over and falling from the right arm and resting on the left shoulder. His handling of hair is also distinctive. He preferred to provide his statues with masses of luxuriant hair and beard and moustaches. His noblest achievement is the figure of the Apostle Andrew.

To Peter Vischer the younger we may attribute the representation of his patron saint. This, as Dr. Seeger has pointed out, is based on a recollection or a drawing of the figure of that Apostle on the façade of the Certosa di Pavia, modified by the individuality of the present artist and adapted to the exigencies of this shrine. It is an absolutely different type from that on the Magdeburg tomb, which had more in common with the St. Peter of old Hermann on the Font at Wittenberg. There the head, to take one point, is larger and adorned with a heavy mass of luxuriant curling hair and beard. But the head of this Apostle is small and

fine; the eyes deep set, the neck sinewy. The loose and admirable fall of the drapery is in the new manner. And with that nervous grasp of the key, that searching gaze, those wrinkled and contracted brows, the youthful craftsman has nobly represented his patron Saint, Peter the bald, intellectual Keeper of the Gates of Heaven.

Completely different again in type and treatment is the figure of the Apostle Bartholomew. (Ill. 13.) It smacks of Rome, and Roman too is Simon. These, we should naturally hazard, were the work of Hermann the eldest son, after his return from his *Rom-reise* in 1516. And in this theory we are confirmed by a passage in a manuscript in the Nuremberg Town Library, which tells us that "Hermann Vischer alone made the Apostle Bartholomew and several tabernacles," as, for instance, without doubt that Roman triumphal arch above the statue of St. Paul.

CHAPTER V

THE TOMB OF MAXIMILIAN

ART has been always, more or less, dependent upon the patronage of the rich and great. And the warm interest evinced in the Arts and Crafts by the Emperor Maximilian, the "last of the Knights," did not a little to provoke that outburst of artistic excellence which distinguished Nuremberg at this time; where the names of Dürer, Vischer, and Krafft shine out pre-eminent among many lesser lights. Maximilian was in many ways the epitome of his age, the personification of the Renaissance. Soldier and man of letters, administrator and theologian, athlete and scholar, he yet found time to encourage artists and to devise and commission innumerable works of art. He was, in fact, as Albert Dürer found to his cost, more ready to give commissions than to pay for them when performed. At Nuremberg he frequently employed Veit Stoss; he had a considerable share in the production of the *Weisskunig* and the *Theuerdank*, a poem describing allegorically the private life and ideals of the Emperor, which was polished and completed by his secretary

Melchior Pfinzing, Provost of St. Sebald's Church. He conceived and commissioned amongst other works Albert Dürer's colossal wood-engraving, the *Triumphal Arch*, which was designed, as usual, for the glorification of this greatest of princes. Wherever he happened to be, at Augsburg, Innsbruck, Nuremberg or Prague, in the course of the conduct of one of his innumerable wars or of a tourney, whilst administering justice, repressing the chivalrous brigandage of petty lords or bleeding a Bamberg banker, his eye was always quick to perceive the merit of any craftsman. Chroniclers repeatedly record his morning rides in a town, and describe the visits which he would pay to the houses of half-a-dozen craftsmen in a day, buying and ordering costly works of art.

He came to visit also the home of that already celebrated yet always modest and unpretending Founder, Peter Vischer, "to whom Princes esteemed it an honour to do honour." Maximilian had before now shown a practical interest in bronze work, and had incidentally displayed his appreciation of Vischer. For when he was starting a Foundry at Mühlau, near Innsbruck, he had had it in contemplation to appoint the "geschickligisten und berichtisten Rotschmied" —the most skilful and famous coppersmith of Nuremberg—Peter Vischer to wit, to superintend the establishment thereof. But Peter had declined the honour, and Stefan Godl from Nuremberg was appointed in his stead.

Now the teeming brain of Maximilian—for whom no plan for his own exaltation was too grandiose, and no project for the advancement of his fame was to be despised—conceived the idea of building for himself a lordly tomb, wherein, after he had been gathered to his forefathers, he might rest, surrounded by the forms of those who had gone to his making. To-day twenty-eight bronze over life-size figures of ancient heroes stand round and guard the Emperor's cenotaph at Innsbruck. Two of these are most markedly superior to the rest as works of art; and these two come from the foundry of Peter Vischer. They are the statues of King Arthur, the very perfect flower of chivalry (Ill. 15), and of Theodoric, King of the Goths. (Ill. 14.) Documentary evidence reveals the fact that in the year 1513 Peter Vischer the elder received from the imperial chest one thousand florins for "zwei grosse messene Pillder" (two large bronze figures). But apart from the teaching of the archives their resemblance to the other works of this foundry leaves no doubt as to the origin of these noble figures. In feeling, in poetry, in grace, as well as in the minute and exquisite finish of the detail, they are indeed worthy of the blossom period of the house of Vischer. Both figures are eloquent of the artist's joy in production, and not of the tradesman's mere delight in a commission. Not that the Vischers were at all to seek on the business side of their craft; they worked, as the modern dealer would

express it, with punctuality, cheapness and despatch. In artistic excellence, as well as in these other important qualities, they far surpassed the labours of the Mühlau Founder, who had secured the commission for all, or almost all, the other statues for the tomb of Maximilian. The Emperor himself, it is recorded, recognized this fact; for he remarked (April 16, 1513), "Für die 3,000 fl. auf welche das bis dahin gegossene einzige Bild Sesselschreiber zu stehen komme, in Nürnberg sechs Bilder hätte giessen lassen können." (For the 3,000 florins to which the one statue hitherto cast by Sesselschreiber amounts, six statues might have been cast at Nuremberg.)

Both the statues that hail from Nuremberg are extremely beautiful, but they are noticeably different in style. They differ so much in that unconscious revelation of the artist's hand, which distinguishes every piece of human work, that I am strongly inclined to accept Dr. Seeger's view, that whilst Peter Vischer the father wrought Theodoric, King of the Goths, it is to his son and namesake, Peter Vischer the younger, that we owe the statue of King Arthur. Theodoric leans on his sword and shield in a pose that is beautiful and imaginative, it is true, but in the execution slightly forced. This figure is weaker and more conventional, less full of life and vigour than that of the King Arthur. Seeger fancies that we can trace in it something of the uneasiness felt by the old craftsman when essaying a new style, and that

STEIN PHOTO.] [TOMB OF MAXIMILIAN, INNSBRUCK

14. THEODORIC, KING OF THE GOTHS

STEIN PHOTO.] [TOMB OF MAXIMILIAN, INNSBRUCK

15. KING ARTHUR

there is discernible here the slight hesitation and misgiving of one who fears that he is attempting what is beyond his strength.

Certainly we get no such impression when we turn to the splendid strenuous figure of Arthur. This *is* the Arthur whom we know, in all the splendour of his manhood, bold and free, the noblest flower of chivalry; Arthur, the very perfect knight, pure, serene in the confidence of his own faith and right, brooking no challenge and no wrong. Here Beauty and Strength have kissed one another; and the spring of this youthful figure, nimble and light of limb, betrays itself even through the hard, straight lines of the heavy, rich armour it bears. It is the type of the noble Teuton of all time, drawn by an artist who had studied the nude and Italian plastic art, and was full of the vigour and confidence of his own youthful ideal. For this bronze surely conveys that conviction of agility for a moment at rest, which you may derive from the sight of a Greek marble or the lithe figure of a modern athlete. And is there not also here something "of that marvellous gesture of moving himself within the" bronze, which Vasari so finely attributed to the St. George of Donatello?

There may perhaps be in this figure a touch of exaggeration which is so splendidly absent from that supreme triumph of the Renaissance; it is certainly more virile and it may be more brutal; but it is enough to claim for Vischer that in this noble creation he challenges comparison with "the

Master of those who know." Doubtless, indeed, both his Arthur and his St. Peter of the Sebaldus-grab owe not a little to the masterpiece of Donatello.

But the beauty of the figure and pose of King Arthur is not all. It need not blind us to the exquisite ornamentation of the armour, which, unlike that of Theodoric, is rich with the richness of the North Italian Renaissance. The dragons thereon are full of life, and the chain of the Order of the Golden Fleece, and all the other minute details of the decoration, are as notable for the fecundity of invention as for the skill in execution which they display.

These two heroic figures were completed by the Vischer family as early as the year 1513, but they did not reach the place for which they had been destined till some ten years later, for the Emperor kept them at Augsburg. And even after they had arrived at Innsbruck and been set in position there, they were not left in peace. A great danger threatened Theodoric in 1548, for it did not square with Charles V.'s conception of the order of the Universe that the king of the Goths should be found among the ancestors of the Hapsburgs. He therefore gave orders that his statue should either be recast or at least be renamed. Fortunately neither of these things got itself done.

CHAPTER VI

THE TUCHER MONUMENT AND THE NUREMBERG MADONNA

THE absorbing interest and labour of the Sebaldusgrab did not by any means exhaust the energies and enterprise of Vischer and his house. That want of money, which has been the source of innumerable works of art, combined with the artist's restless striving after new forms of self-expression, prompted the production of many another bronze during this span of years.

We have seen that the heroic figures of Arthur and Theodoric were completed in the year 1513, and to that year also belongs the original design for the Rathaus Railing, the chequered and disastrous history of which we shall describe later. Now it was proposed to found a monument to perpetuate the memory of a famous Doctor of Law ("suæ ætatis Jureconsultorum facile princeps," says the inscription), one Henning Goden, Provost of Wittenberg and Prebendary of Erfurt. Peter Vischer was entrusted with its execution, and it was erected in 1521 at Erfurt and, in duplicate, at Wittenberg. The subject chosen was that

of the crowning of Mary. The Madonna is represented kneeling on the clouds; her hands are folded in prayer and her rich tresses float round a nobly beautiful head and stream over her shoulders. She is in the act of being crowned by God the Father and God the Son, who sit enthroned on either side of the Virgin Mother. The Holy Dove hovers above her. Two characteristic but excessively plump little angels playing musical instruments in either corner fill up the spaces left by the curving scroll work above, whilst at the feet of the Madonna the Prebendary kneels, supported by his patron saint, St. John, whose hand is laid upon his shoulder. Clouds and angels complete the foreground.

Of this tomb-plate Lübke writes:

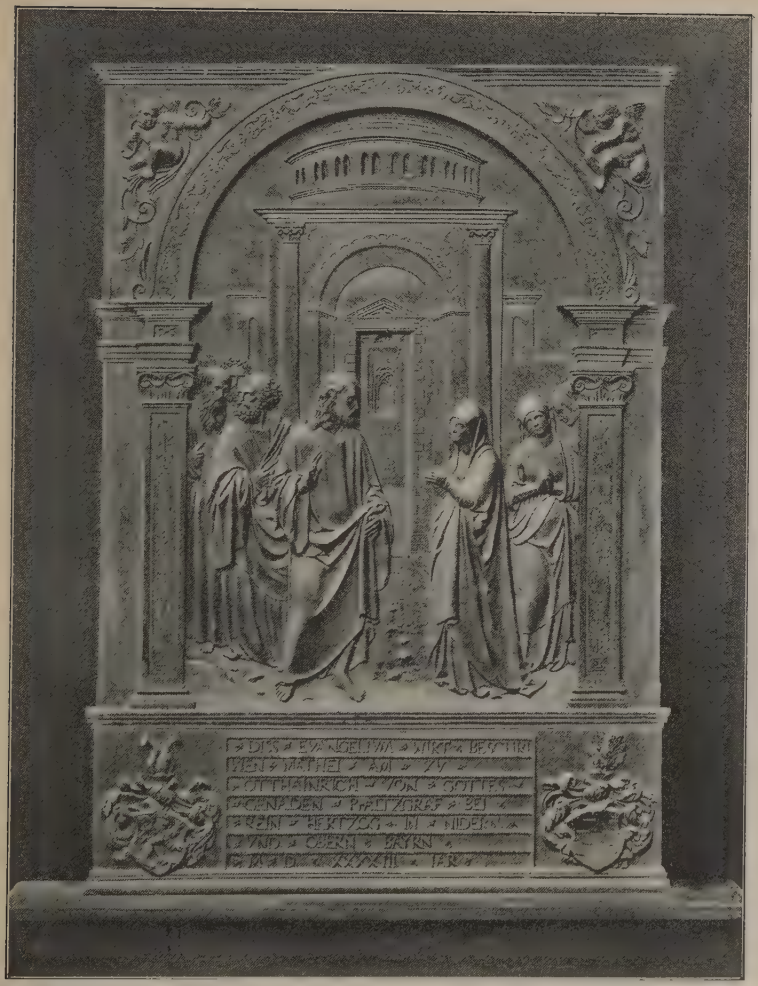
"The simple beauty of the composition, the broad, free style of the drapery, the noble loftiness in form and expression of the heads, especially of God the Father, place this work in the ranks of the noblest creations of German art at that date."

The memorial certainly does bear unmistakable signs of Peter Vischer's handiwork, but it is impossible not to feel that in many points, as for instance the articulation of the hands and feet, and the anatomy of the body in the case of the figure of Christ, it is decidedly inferior to the best work of the house of Vischer. Compare it with the beautiful tomb-plate of Frau Margarete Tucher in the cathedral at Regensburg (Ratisbon) and the difference in manner and technique at once

leaps to the eye. Yet this memorial also was made in 1521. (Ill. 16.) It can hardly have been designed by the same hand, although this, like the monument of the Eissen family in the Church of St. Ægidius at Nuremberg, to which it is near akin, certainly came from the Vischer foundry, for it bears the mark and signature

P⊢V

Normberge . 1521. But the trade-mark between these two initials is substantially the same as that found on the inkstand of 1525. We have no choice, then, but to follow Bergau and Seeger and to attribute these two former works, in great part at any rate, to Peter Vischer the younger. And, indeed, they exhibit to a high degree all those qualities which are most characteristic of his work. There is a rhythmic balance in the composition which at once recalls the reliefs on the Sebaldus-grab attributed to him. Here again the artist has seized a fine moment in the dramatic incident he wishes to portray. He has harmonized and subordinated all the characters of that pathetic scene when Christ met the sisters of the dead Lazarus. The noble figure of the Christ who has stepped forward to listen to and to grant the prayer of the bereaved sister forms the centre of a picture whereof the disputing Apostles and the sorrowing women are the necessary complement. With regard to the Apostles themselves it only



STEIN PHOTO.] [CATHEDRAL, RATISBON

16. MEETING OF CHRIST WITH THE SISTERS OF LAZARUS
(Tucher Monument)

requires a moment's comparison to demonstrate that their figures are mere modifications of those on the Sebaldusgrab, and they may have been wrought by any member of the family, therefore, or even by an assistant. For the craftsmen of those days were obliged to take a frankly business view of their handiwork. Michel Wolgemut left much in each of his pictures to be done by his pupils and assistants, and Dürer, too, following his master's custom was, in too many cases, forced to adopt the same practice. For a man must live, and Dürer found that his careful and elaborate style of painting was simply beggaring him. The commissions received by the Vischer family were necessarily executed after something of the same spirit. The design would be sketched out by the old man or one of his sons, or, again, by him and his sons in part and in consultation. Then whilst the more skilful of them wrought the more important figures and details of the piece, the subsidiary details and characters would be left to the 'prentice hands. In the case of the Tucher monument the task of supplying the Apostle figures must have fallen to one of these, and he would naturally base them upon the famous masterpieces of the House in that line. But in the noble figure of the Christ, in the poise and the moulding of the head, and in that spiritual searching gaze with which the Saviour seems to be looking into the very heart of Lazarus' sister and gauging her faith, we cannot fail to recognize the

style of the creator of the St. Peter and St. John of the Sebaldusgrab, and of the author of the Orpheus of the Plaquettes. Equally true is this of the modelling, pose and drapery of the female figures, to which particular attention should be given.

The background, too, is the work of a Master, and the gradual deepening of the relief is worked out with a skill and confidence which argues that it is the work of a Master who has made a considerable study of perspective. The treatment of perspective and the very low relief are indeed entirely in the manner of the early Florentine Renaissance. The same influence is discernible in the style of the architecture in the background. It is interesting to note the favourite device of a Perugino or a Raphael reproduced in the cupola-crowned building which serves as a finish to the picture. It was not for nothing that Hermann Vischer had made his journey south some years before, and returned laden with those sketches which "delighted his old father and provided practice for his brothers." The deviser of this temple and of those framing pillars with their Corinthian capitals has learnt many a lesson recently from his brother's work.

In the monument of the Eissen family which is placed in the Church of St. Ægidius at Nuremberg, and belongs to the year 1522, we have a work which must be by the same hand as that which designed the Tucher memorial. The simi-

larity of the signature and of the style is convincing testimony. The subject is the favourite Pietà, the lamentation over Christ's body after the descent from the Cross. Here we have the figures of the faithful women, and of John the beloved disciple, and Joseph of Arimathea mourning, whilst Nicodemus is reverently wrapping the corpse in the cerements of the grave. Once more in composing his subject the artist has seized the dramatic moment. The eyes of all these faithful followers are fixed upon the dead body of their Lord. Their gestures and their expressions betoken the intense grief of each, and each has his place and share in the divine tragedy. The unity thus attained is heightened by the dramatic contrast of the one person, the servant, who stares at the body, unaffected save by vulgar curiosity, all unaware that she is in the presence of the world's most grievous and most wonderful mystery. (Ill. 17.)

The figure and head of Joseph of Arimathea are nobly beautiful, and, like the drapery, remind us of the St. Peter on the Sebaldusgrab. His outstretched hands are eloquent of sorrow and, in common with those of the women who kneel behind their Master, they speak to a study of Italian art and of the drawings of Leonardo da Vinci.

The Christ in this monument resembles in the treatment of the eyes, and the hair and in the moulding of the head that of the Tucher memorial of the previous year. The body is foreshortened,

STEIN PHOTO.] [ST. ÆGIDIUS CHURCH, NÜRNBERG

17. BEWEINUNG CHRISTI
(Eissen Memorial)

and the foreshortening cannot be termed altogether successful. But successful to an extraordinary degree is the spiritual, sympathetic expression of the countenance, and indicative of a poet's sympathy with sorrow, and his power of showing it, is that down-hanging arm, masterly executed in strong relief.

The young Peter Vischer had known much sorrow, and was acquainted with grief beyond his years. The bereavements of his father, the loss of his brother's wife, and afterwards of his brother Hermann himself, must have touched his poet's heart and deepened his powers of sympathetic imagination. The strong stirring of religious emotion which was at this time abroad in the land would tend still further to chasten the exuberant joyousness of his youthful spirit, and to bring him into touch with the more serious aspects of life. Neudörffer has recorded for us his love of the poetical side of life; his own Aquarelle on the *Reformation* proves the seriousness of his interest in the great religious question of the day, and the evidence of the development of his powers in his own undoubted works of art is potent to demonstrate his enthusiasm for learning. Remembering these facts let us compare for a moment with the sisters of Lazarus in the Tucher memorial, that superb work of art in the Germanic Museum at Nuremberg, which is known as the "Praying Madonna." (Ill. 18.)

"No second glance is required to assure us that

we have here not only the *chef-d'œuvre* of Nuremberg carving, but also one of the works of art of all time. And yet the name of the master is unknown, and the very date of the work is a matter of dispute. Clearly the beautiful female figure of this sorrowing Mary, this praying Madonna as she is called (*trauende, betende Maria*) once formed one of a group, and stood facing St. John at the foot of the Cross, gazing upwards in that bitter grief which is beyond the expression and abandonment of tears. Who can that artist have

[MUSEUM, NÜRNBERG

18. THE NUREMBERG MADONNA

been who could select that pose of the head, that poise of the limbs, who could carve those robes, which, in purity and flow have never been surpassed in German art, and who could express in the suppliant hands such poignant emotion? *Man weiss nicht!* And whose touch was so delicate that with his chisel he could stamp on the upturned face those mingled feelings of sorrow so supreme, yearning so intense, love so human, hope so divine? For all this we can read there still, even through the grey-green coat of paint which certainly had no place in the original intentions of the artist. *Man weiss nicht!* But this much one may hazard —that it was some German artist, touched by the spirit of the Italian Renaissance till he rose to heights of artistic performance never elsewhere attained by him, and scarcely ever approached by his fellows."

So I have written elsewhere of this beautiful gem of German art. But is it so certain that the author is unknown? The temptation to attribute it to Peter Vischer the younger is extremely strong, especially when we compare it with the figure of Lazarus' sister.

It has, at different times and by various writers, been attributed to almost every conceivable German craftsman—to Adam Krafft, of course, and to Veit Stoss in turn, amongst others. But the work of none of these artists approaches the style, the beauty, the refinement of this figure, and is, in many essentials, distinctly opposed thereto. But

if it is not by these, can it be by Peter Vischer's great son? The theory, it must be confessed, is more probable than provable. We can only say that in his greatest moment he might have done this thing, in making a model for a projected bronze figure. For the creator of the King Arthur at Innsbruck must be conceded to be potentially capable of any masterpiece in this kind, and the Madonna is not beyond the limits of his power. The slenderness of the figure is a point in favour of this authorship, and not, as has been argued, in opposition to it, for there is noticeable in the female figures of the young Peter Vischer, an increasing tendency to discard the squat Bavarian type and to adopt the slenderer proportions of the Italian model. Observe, further, that in the fall of the drapery of the Madonna there is nothing of severity, nothing of distortion as in other carvings of the same period by other hands. Rather do the sweep and movement of it recall that of certain of the apostles of the Sebaldusgrab and the arrangement of it as regards the feet is similar. It may, in fact, be stated, without fear of contradiction, that the serpentine sweep and the arrangement of the drapery, drawn tight over the right leg and covering, as it does, the thrust out foot below, is a motive practically confined in the German art of that period to the works of the House of Vischer. It reminds us of the Apostles in St. Sebald's church: it is repeated emphatically in the fall of the drapery of the sisters of Lazarus.

And surely the pose of the sister of Lazarus on the left hand and that of the Madonna is substantially the same, although, in the case of the latter, it has been refined and improved. That pose of the bent leg is one of the most beautiful and eloquent of all the positions of the human body.[1] But the similarity does not end there.

The right leg, the left arm and hand resting on the hip, the poise of the head and the style of dress are all in the same manner. Nothing, again, is more characteristic of an artist than his treatment of hands. And with those expressive hands of the Madonna we may confidently compare the hands of the woman who is behind the body of Christ or the hands of Joseph in the Pietà of 1522, or the hands of St. John in the Sebaldusgrab, or of the female figure on the inkstand of 1525. Vischer-like also is the pure, refined expression and type of face, which recalls on the one hand the yearning gaze of the aforesaid figure, and the soulful look of Eurydice on the other.

But enough has been said. Peter Vischer the younger was, we think, capable of producing such a work of art as the Madonna, and of no one else whose work we know can we say as much. Yet such a masterpiece is not thrown off by an unpractised hand. There is good reason, then, for accepting the theory suggested by the remarks of

[1] That it was a favourite one with the young Vischer may be seen by comparing the female figures of the Inkstands, pp. 96, 97.

Herr von Bezold[1] and crediting our craftsman with the glory of this great work. In the next chapter we shall deal with some minor, undisputed works of his, a careful study of which will certainly, in our opinion, not tend to invalidate the claim now advanced on his behalf.

[1] "Anzeiger des Germanischen Nationalmuseums." No. 2. Nuremberg, 1896.

CHAPTER VII

THE MINOR WORKS OF PETER VISCHER THE YOUNGER

SOME time during the year which followed the completion of the Eissen Monument, Cardinal Albrecht von Brandenburg, Archbishop of Magdeburg and Mainz, it is recorded, sent to the old bronze-founder of Nuremberg requesting him to let his son come to him to confer about certain orders. Whether the young Peter went or not we do not know, nor is it certain whether it was his tomb which the Cardinal had previously ordered, or the great State Seal of the Archbishop, which is with some probability ascribed to this craftsman, that was in debate. The tomb-plate of the Cardinal was finished by 1525, and is now in the Parish Church of Aschaffenburg, though it is at Mainz that the Cardinal was buried. For the fashion in tombs was changing, and, in order to be in the fashion, the Cardinal subsequently ordered a new tomb of red marble beneath which he now lies in the Cathedral of Mainz.

"And I shall fill my slab of basalt there,
And 'neath my tabernacle take my rest,
With those nine columns round me, two and two,
The odd one at my feet where Anselm stands;

Peach-blossom marble all, the rare, the ripe
As fresh-poured red wine of a mighty pulse . . .
True peach,
Rosy and flawless."

So the German Cardinal shared the taste of Browning's Roman Bishop. It was a taste that spread rapidly from Italy about this time, and brought in its train swift ruin to the industry of the bronze craftsmen. But the day of disaster had not yet come, and meantime the young Peter Vischer was busy with other works. He had not yet, however, succeeded in being admitted as a meister of the Guild of Coppersmiths, and he took the present opportunity of submitting the Cardinal's tomb-plate as his masterpiece. It was rejected for some obscure reason, just as, two years later, his splendid memorial of Frederick the Wise was rejected. Both of these pieces are signed "Opus M. Petri Fischers . Norimberge." In face of the fact that they were not accepted as masterpieces we cannot interpret the letter M. in these inscriptions as the initial of *Magistri* (master). It must stand rather for *Minoris*—"the work of Peter Fischer the younger."

The present memorial takes the form of a life-size character-study of a mighty prince of the Church, and it is set in a Renaissance framework. It is a noble and intense piece of work which has been spoilt by the inscription tablet which covers the body.

Unlike his father, but like most other artists of

his day, Peter Vischer the younger, as we gather from Neudörffer's mention of him, did not confine himself to bronze work, but dabbled in various kindred arts. We have a noticeable instance of this in the "Allegory on the Reformation" (1524), an aquarelle now preserved at Weimar, which once roused the enthusiasm of Goethe, and which reveals to us his political and religious creed. In common with Hans Sachs, Albert Dürer, and Willibald Pirkheimer, and the great majority of Nurembergers, Peter Vischer had thrown in his lot with the Protestant Reformers, and boldly espoused the cause of Luther. Luther he here represents as some hero of old story who has destroyed the palace and upset the throne of the usurper, and scattered the base crowd of his courtiers. The Pope and the mighty princes of the Church have been put down from their seat and the horde of their hateful minions—Pride, Luxury, and Avarice—flee away. In their stead Faith, Hope, and Charity are about to enthrone Justice, whilst Luther, the humble and unworldly, shows the straight path to Christ, who descends from the clouds to save publicans and sinners. Rome's might, it is implied, is broken; the German people can at last, through Luther's act, hold direct communion with their Redeemer once more. Only a German Emperor, so it must have seemed to the German enthusiasts of that time, was wanting—no Spaniard like Charles V., with his brood of alien courtiers—to continue the work of Luther

and to fulfil the national ideal. And perhaps, as Dr. Seeger suggests, Peter Vischer the younger looked to Frederick the Wise, Elector of Saxony, as the heaven-appointed Kaiser—that Prince whose portrait he executed in so loving and masterly a fashion two years later.

That love of allegory which is indicated by this drawing, and by the artist's addiction to poetry, was a taste he shared with Dürer and Holbein the younger. It is further illustrated by the two inkstands which come from his hand and, in a less degree, by the two plaquettes of Orpheus and Eurydice we have now to consider. (Ill. 19 and 20.)

There are, indeed, four plaquettes on this subject in existence, all undoubtedly by the same master. But three of these are practically identical. The other, the earliest as it would appear, is in the possession of M. Dreyfus of Paris. It was at one time attributed to Jacopo de' Barbari. But this, like the other plaquettes, bears Vischer's mark clearly enough—two fish lying back to back pierced through by a nail or dagger, a device found also on the two inkstands. The two nude figures of Orpheus and Eurydice do, however, undoubtedly owe very much to the influence of Jacopo and Sansovino on the one hand, just as they are related to the *Adam and Eve* of Dürer on the other. In this earlier version of the subject it is evident that the artist has been moved by the above-mentioned influences to study the nude, but his study is not

STEIN PHOTO.] [PLAQUETTE IN POSSESSION OF M. DREYFUS, PARIS

19. ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE

yet complete. For the modelling of the Orpheus is not all that could be desired, the legs of this figure in particular being awkward and constrained. The Eurydice is more successful, and is less hard and angular in treatment. But, as Lübke observed, the parallelism produced by the presentation of the two forms in the act of turning lends a distinct harshness to the composition. For all that there is one quality present here which we have learnt to expect from this master. He has seized the dramatic moment when, in Vergil's words, "a sudden madness took hold of the unwary lover," and, "in his desire to behold her, he turned his eyes" upon his half-regained Eurydice. But he could not hold her safe "within the bond of one immortal look." Just as she emerges from the rocks of the underworld he yields to this desire and turns. And as he turns and looks she stops and begins, under the constraint of the inexorable law of Proserpine, to be drawn back to the shades whence she came. Into her face there has come a look of sorrow and sad reproach, whilst the movement of her hands and head and hair betoken the beginning of that inevitable return. With the gesture of her left hand Eurydice seems almost to utter the lines of Vergil :

"Quis et me miseram et te perdidit, Orpheu, Quis tantus furor?
Jamque vale—!"

The other version of this same subject to which Peter Vischer the younger returned apparently in

later years is still more finely conceived and finely executed. The artist by this time, about the year 1520 let us say, had found his own soul and strength, and dared to be more himself. The Berlin plaquette, which passed from the Nagler collection to the Berlin Museum in 1835, is a great improvement upon the old theme. The composition is in all respects much more rhythmical and harmonious. Orpheus has been stepping quickly forward, playing as only Orpheus with his lute could play, playing for life and love and happiness, when suddenly the irresistible fear has come upon him that she, his half-regained Eurydice, may not be following him. He has, under the spur of that doubt, flung round his head quickly to reassure himself. And she, even in that instant, begins to turn again towards those shadowy regions whence his music and his faith, so far maintained, had drawn her. Reproachful, sorrowing, in the agony of her love and her despair, she gazes at him with one long last look. Here the artist has turned the back-fluttering veil to a new and beautiful motive, and, like the arrangement of the hair and the treatment of the feet, it has been fittingly and carefully thought out to illustrate the two movements in which the tragedy of the moment lies. The style is essentially Italianate, and the device of the two spiked fish in the corner of the plaquette proclaim the authorship of it. Orpheus, it will be noticed, is not provided with the lúte of antiquity but with a

STEIN PHOTO.] [PLAQUETTE IN THE MUSEUM, BERLIN

20. ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE

violin. This is not surprising, for there was a general tendency both in Italian and German art to furnish mythical personages with modern musical instruments. Lübke reminds us, for instance, of the Apollo in Raphael's " Parnassus."

Of the other two plaquettes to which we have referred, one is to be found in the Hamburg Museum, and the other was, till 1807, in St. Blasien in the Black Forest, but is now preserved in the institution of St. Paul in Carinthia. They are almost exactly the same with the Berlin copy. But the latter has a poetical inscription above on the upper edge which is absent from the example at St. Paul.

The inscription, which a recollection of the fondness evinced by the young Peter for the study of poetry inclines us to attribute to his pen, runs as follows :

ORPHEA CVM SILVIS FLVVIOS ETSAXA MOVENTĒ
GRECIA LAETEOS FERT ADYSSE LAVIS
EVRYDICN̄ ILLIC VITAE REVOCASSE PRIORI
SERVASSET STIGIO SI MODO PACTA IOVI ;

which, being roughly interpreted, is to the effect that Orpheus, moving, according to the Grecian fable, rocks and woods and rivers by his music, came to the Infernal Regions, and there had quite won back Eurydice to life if only he had observed the conditions of the king of Hades.

The Hamburg exemplar has this inscription also, with a few literal variations, as, for instance,

the mistake of *saxo* instead of *saxa*, and the correction of *adiisse* (which is necessary for the scansion of the line) in place of *adysse*.

A restless, uncontented care of doing better, which is the hall-mark of genius, is proclaimed in the spirit of the craftsman who thus turned again in his maturity to improve, and, if he could, to perfect the theme he had attempted in his youth. The same spirit is evident in the similar development of a theme which we find in the case of two bronze inkstands formerly in the possession of the late H. Fortnum, Esq., of Stanmore, and now forming part of the Fortnum Collection, bequeathed by him to the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford. The first was picked up by the collector in Paris; the second in Genoa. (Ill. 21 and 22.) They are mentioned by Christoph von Murr[1] in 1778 as being in the collection of Dr. Silberrad at Nuremberg, and are called by him "two admirable bas-reliefs in bronze by Peter Vischer." He further describes the second, that is, the later, in the following terms: "It represents the reminding of the future life. Near an urn, which might serve as an inkpot, stands a naked female figure, about six inches high, pointing towards heaven with her finger. In front of her a skull is lying, behind her a small shield and dagger. A beautiful idea. Leaning against the urn is a tablet with the inscription 'VITAM NON

[1] "Beschreibung der vornehmsten Merkwürdigkeiten," quoted by Seeger.

MORTEM RECOGITA'" (Think on life not death). "Under the base is the sign of the master, two

STEIN PHOTO.] [INKSTAND, ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM, FORTNUM COLLECTION, OXFORD

21. "EARTHLY LIFE"

fish with the initials P.V. 1525. . . . Both pieces are still just as they came from the foundry, and one must admire the accuracy and draughtsman-

ship which betray the hand of one who is a master of his craft."

STEIN PHOTO.] [INKSTAND, ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM, FORTNUM COLLECTION, OXFORD

22. "HEAVENLY LIFE"

Now if this female figure above mentioned is rightly interpreted as reminding us of the life to come, the heavenly life, we may regard it as a

later and natural variation of the allegory of earthly life represented by the other and earlier work. There the female figure of Life is standing with her foot upon a skull, trampling on the emblem of Death, and is pointing to herself, gazing self-centred, as who should say, "Enjoy life, think on me and forget the death that cometh with the morrow." And on the tablet at her feet recurs the legend, "VITAM NON MORTEM RECOGITA!" She is teaching the Renaissance love of beauty and the lesson of the joy of existence and the frank delight in the things of this earth. Probably, then, this work was executed shortly after the young craftsman's sojourn in Italy, when he was filled with the joy of life and had been studying the nude with all the enthusiasm of the early Renaissance school. A mixture of early Renaissance and of mediæval elements is indeed distinctly observable. For the four-cornered vase and its lid is eminently Gothic in character. On the four under sides of the vase we find repeated the sign of the two fish which we have learnt to associate with Peter Vischer the younger, and on the four upper sides the same medallion of a man's head. Medallions, we know, Peter Vischer the younger turned his hand to frequently after his return from Italy. The Medusa head with the winged helmet, and the club on the base, recall the style of Sansovino, whilst the lion's feet on which the vase rests, and much of the decoration, correspond with details on the Sebaldusgrab. The pose and the rhythmic

movement of the female form are beautiful in themselves, but the neck of the figure is too thick and the body excessively short. When, ten or fifteen years later (1525), the craftsman with a deepened sense of the mystery and sorrow of the world returned to this theme, he read a new meaning into that favourite motto of his, "Think on life not death," and he also remedied in great part the faults of his earlier effort. The figure, indeed, remains still too short in comparison with its breadth, but it is far slimmer than the other; the work is much more delicate, the lines less accentuated. The artist is now a wiser, sadder, more spiritual man. With his feeling and his knowledge of the world, his power also and his freedom have increased and his mastery of modelling. The influence of his brother's journey to Rome and of the lessons he had brought home with him, is evident everywhere, and not least in the striving after simplicity which has induced him to leave the base plain and not richly ornamented as was the former one.

The theme itself can indeed hardly be called a development but rather the counterpart of the other. It is the answer of the spiritual side of man to the earthly promptings of his nature. Think not on this life nor on this death—but on the other life. In obedience to this point of view the skull has been placed in a more prominent position. It is no longer trampled on in the ecstasy of earthly enjoyment but recognized rather, and

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triumphed over, by this upward-gazing Vita, upward pointing. Death, it is meant, should be used, and welcomed almost, as the gate of heavenly life. The many deaths that had darkened the doors of his own house had, it is probable, sobered and saddened Peter Vischer's great son, and perhaps his own failing health or some premonition of an early death, was by this time leading him to reflect in a chastened yet hopeful spirit on the motto that he loved, and to interpret it afresh in this allegorical wise: "Vitam non Mortem Recogita." It was the motto inscribed upon his grave in St. Rochus Church when he died but three years later, and was laid to rest by his aged father.

CHAPTER VIII

THE TOMB OF ELECTOR FREDERICK THE WISE, AND THE RATHAUS RAILING

BUT the work of Peter Vischer the younger was not yet done. It remained, indeed, for him to perform some of his greatest achievements. Certain documents quoted by Baader[1] show that it was he who, in the beginning of the year 1527, completed the monument to the Elector Frederick the Wise at Wittenberg, of which Lübke writes that it is "a classic work and through it the German art of that period is worthy to take rank with the Italian." The life-size figure of the great Elector stands in strong relief upon a bronze plate within a frame of Corinthian pillars, outside which, on either side, the sixteen coats of arms of the ancestors of the Prince's house are recorded, whilst his own arms form the central point of the arch above his head. Above the latter coat-of-arms two sturdy angels, forming a central headpiece, hold a laurel wreath, and therewith the Elector's favourite text inscribed in Latin: "The word of

[1] "Beiträge zur Kunstgeschichte Nürnbergs."

the Lord endureth for ever." The base on which the feet rest is richly decorated with forms of sea monsters and sporting children in the craftsman's most joyous and luxuriant manner. Frederick himself is draped boldly in the broad sweep of the Electoral cloak, and in a cape of rich ermine. Of ermine, too, is the Elector's hat, which rests upon a noble brow. But even beneath those heavy robes the vigour and spring of the man's energetic form make themselves felt, nor can the gloved hands disguise the strength of his grasp upon the Sword of the Realm, which he holds aslant his shoulder. And the face is full of life and fire, quick with the keen gaze of a leader of men, and eloquently expressive of determination and strenuous endeavour. This is, without doubt, a noble portrait of princely faith and manly strength. "One can imagine," says Lübke, "no more beautiful picture of strength, nobility and immovable Christian trust in God." What then must have been the feelings of the craftsman when the Guild of Coppersmiths refused to recognize it as a "Masterpiece," as they had already refused to accept his tomb-plate of Elector Albrecht von Mainz!

Assuredly it was not the Meistersingers of Nuremberg alone who failed to appreciate a real masterpiece when they saw one. For it is on record that this noble effigy was rejected by the Incorporated Guild of Masters of Rotschmiedhandwerk, when it was submitted to them by

STEIN PHOTO.] [SCHLOSSKIRCHE, WITTENBERG

23. ELECTOR FREDERICK THE WISE

Peter Vischer the younger as the piece of work by which, for the second time, he claimed the rank of master among them. We do not know on what pettifogging grounds, whether of inaccuracy of detail or of personal spite, admission was refused him. (Ill. 23.)

But it is clear that a considerable scandal was created by their refusal. For it is further on record that the Council, moved perhaps by the influence of his father and his friends, took the step of interfering on behalf of the artist's reputation. An appeal had been made from the decision of the Guild, and the "Members of the Council," we learn from Baader, "to whom it was shown gave it their approval, and on May 22 (1527?) they commanded the Masters of the Guild of Coppersmiths to accept this monument as a masterpiece, and to recognize the author of it as a Master." This, they explained out of deference to the feelings of the Masters, was to be an exceptional case, and was not to be held to the prejudice of the Guild and its rules. The sworn Masters, however, protested against such a proceeding, and they did not obey the order of the Council. The matter rested there for some time, but a few years after the death of the artist, in the interests, perhaps, of his posthumous renown, the Council repeated their command (May 22, 1532), and added a rider to the effect that Peter Vischer was qualified as a Master by the monument he had made even if he had not always

executed his masterpieces in strict accordance with the prescribed rules. As to the artist himself, he was apparently disgusted by this second failure, and he gave up trying to become a Master in this Guild on the merits of his work. For we read that "Peter Vischer's son of the same name was received as Master of the Guild of Thimble-Makers in the year 1527. This Guild and that of the Coppersmiths were at that period still united, though later they separated."

But whether the monument won the young Peter Vischer the Mastership or not, it is undoubtedly a masterpiece of German Renaissance. It is by document and signature his as it is his in design and execution. There are, indeed, still a few traces of the earlier influences of his house visible. The background, for instance, is decorated in the Gothic style, and the fantastic figures in the two corners formed by the arch remind us of those on the tomb-plate of the Duchess Helene von Mecklenburg, for whose father, Elector Philip of the Palatinate, his father had worked in Heidelberg thirty-three years before. But in spite of the beauty of the rich details of the elaborate architecture, arms and pilasters, that form the setting of this work, it is the central commanding figure of the whole which rightly rivets our attention. In this strong and thoughtful man of action and man of mind, who is a Christian and a fighter, a warrior, but none the less a theologian, whose watchword recorded on the monument was (in

spite of all the Popes and princes of Europe), "The word of the Lord endureth for ever," Peter Vischer has proclaimed, so it has been suggested, the ideal Kaiser for whom Germany was looking in vain, the perfect Emperor of the Reformation movement. The power of portraiture which his practice as a maker of medallions had developed, has enabled him to lend to the bronze a wonderful force of expression, so that he may even challenge a comparison with Dürer, who, thirty years previously, had portrayed the protector of Luther.

The design of this monument was borrowed by Hans Vischer, who copied it in 1534 to serve as a memorial of Prince John the Stable, producing, however, but a feeble version of the original.

It may be supposed that the relations between Peter Vischer the younger and the Guild of Coppersmiths were somewhat strained by their treatment of him. For this reason, perhaps, and also for the reason that the new Italian fashion of tombstones, had, by this time, injuriously affected the demand for bronze work, he seems to have thought seriously of leaving Nuremberg in the year following the completion of the Wittenberg monument. The quarrel with the House of Fugger, which we shall presently relate, may likewise have conduced to make him entertain the proposal which came to him now from the agent of Duke Albrecht of Prussia, or it may be that he approached the agent on his own initiative. That prince was, for reasons of his own with which

we have no concern, anxious to secure the services of a cannon-founder. It was suggested that the young Peter Vischer should go to Prussia to act in this capacity. But he was not destined to do so. The Duke's agent reports unfavourably. "He is too delicate a craftsman," he says, "and has no experience in casting large pieces." It would have made little difference, in fact, if he had gone, for he died in this same year—the year in which Nuremberg lost also her prince of draughtsmen—Albert Dürer.

The documents which refer to this matter of the Duke Albrecht are to be found in the State Archives at Königsberg, and were first quoted by Döbner,[1] who writes as follows:

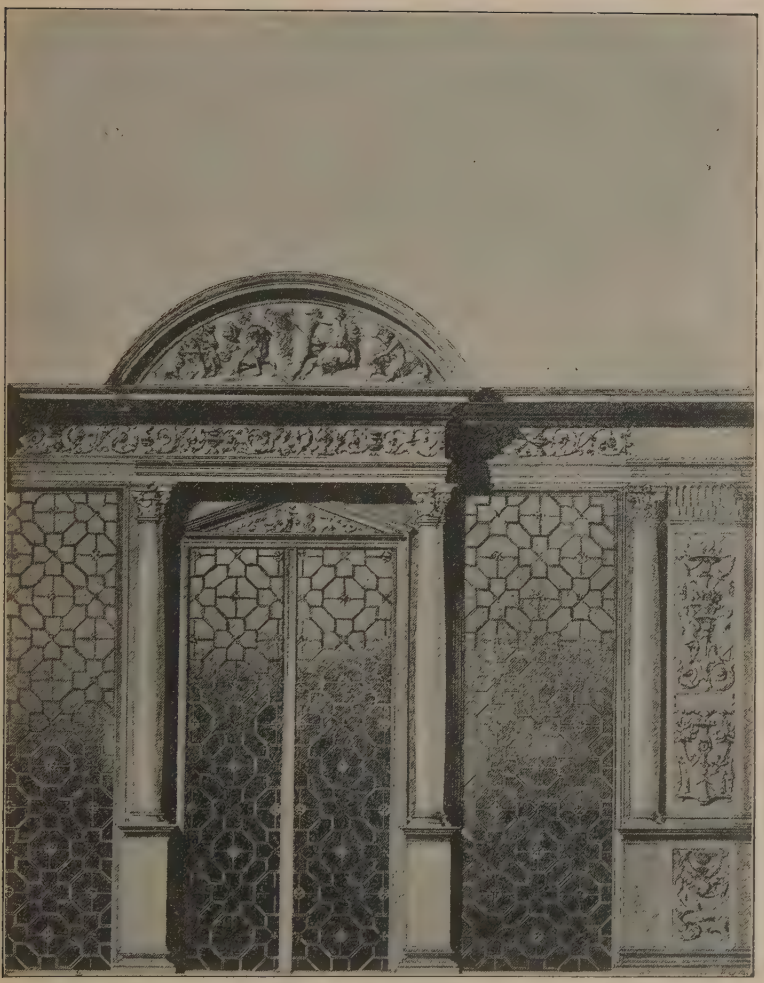
"Duke Albrecht of Prussia had corresponded in January, 1528, with a citizen of Nuremberg named Bastian Startz, who was to procure a cannon-founder for him from that city." Startz wrote to him from there on May 30, 1528, in very illiterate German, to the effect that "Jorg Clingenbeck has had dealings with one who professes to be a *Puxsengeisser*. Clingenbeck and I could not subsequently discover that he had ever in his life cast any large pieces, but only monuments and statuettes, and on that account your Highness is hereby advised that he is too delicate a craftsman. And this *Puxsenmeister* is called by the name of Petter Vischer."

[1] "Peter-Vischer-Studien." A. W. Döbner

As early as March 8, in the same year, "Pawl Viescher, son of Peter Vischer, the copper worker at Nuremberg," had received the following letter from Königsberg:

"We have received your letter in which you say that we have it in mind to have several cannons cast, and that we shall require a Master for that purpose, and further that you are inclined to visit this country and to see what is to be seen, and also that for the time being work with your father is slack, and so forth. These and other matters in your letter have been communicated to us. And on these points we give you to understand that we do have it in view to cast several cannon, and, seeing that we have heard favourable mention made of your father's work, we think it likely that you have learnt much from this same father of yours, and we are therefore disposed to allow you to come here, and we will then inspect your work and speak with you and have you bargained with. This is the answer which we are graciously pleased to make to your letter, and we consent to express to you our gracious favour. Given at Königsberg. (Konigsperkuts.)"

Whether Paul did avail himself of this princely permission to go to Prussia and be bargained with we do not know. If he did, he did not stay there more than a year. For he was back in Nuremberg in September, 1529, and in the following August he had sold the foundry which he had inherited to his brother Hans, and was already



STEIN PHOTO.] [FORMERLEY AT NÜRNBERG

24. THE RATHAUS RAILING

settled at Mainz. There he acquired the rights of a citizen, and died in December, 1531.

Meantime the Vischers, father and sons, were busy, and had at intervals long been busy, with the last supreme work of their foundry, the Rathaus Railing. The story of the chequered career of this beautiful work takes us back some years in the history of the House. At the same time as Maximilian commissioned Peter Vischer to execute two bronze figures for his tomb, the great family of Fugger ordered a railing to be made to shut off their family chapel in St. Anne's Church at Augsburg. The design for this railing was completed by the old Peter Vischer. It was submitted to and received the approval of the patron. This was during the absence of Hermann Vischer in his journey to Rome in 1514-15. But when he returned full of new ideas and laden with sketches of the beautiful things he had seen, his enthusiasm for the new style of the antique quickly imparted itself to his father and brothers. Always eager to learn and ready to appreciate the best, father and brothers alike studied the sketches of Hermann, and thus, after his early death, his influence asserted itself more strongly than ever before. The result was that the design for the railing no longer satisfied its author. It was overhauled, and soon revised and improved in many details suggested by the new-found inspiration of the later renaissance. (Ill. 24 and 25.)

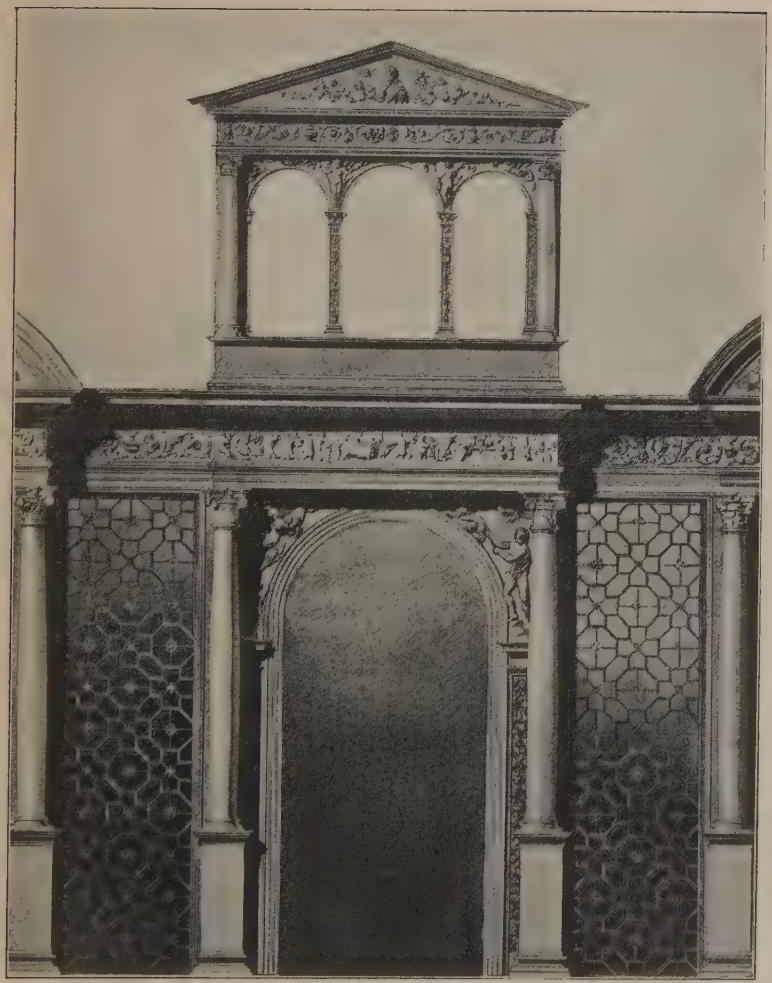
The alterations thus introduced by the Vischer

family can only have been improvements; improvements introduced by these craftsmen because anything below their best was intolerable to their artistic conscience. But it does not pay to be an artist when you work on commission. So Dürer also had found. And the Vischers in their turn suffered from their enthusiasm. The Fuggers, who had given the commission and had expressed their approval of the original design, died. Their heirs, noticing a difference between the approved sketch and the finished product, suspected a fraud, or, perhaps, seized the opportunity of avoiding the expense of this piece of ancestral extravagance. They therefore brought an action for breach of contract against the house of Vischer. After several weary years of litigation—for the law's delays stretched from 1522 to 1529—a decision was given. The Fuggers were released from the responsibility of their ancestors' commission, and the railing was thrown upon the hands of the heirs of Peter Vischer. For the verdict was not awarded till eight months after the old man's death, which occurred on the 7th of January, 1529, when he was buried in the same grave as his two sons and three wives who had died before him. His heirs, then, the sons who survived him, were left to dispose of the railing as best they could, but they were not called upon to restore the money which had already been paid on account, and which amounted to some fourteen hundred odd gulden. They turned therefore to the Nuremberg Council

and offered the railing to them to adorn the Rathaus. On July 15, 1530, the Council bought it as it was, paying six gulden per hundredweight for it.

The railing, still incomplete, was allowed to lie neglected in the cellars of the Rathaus for some years. But at last it was finished and erected. For when the Council heard on good authority that Count Otto Heinrich of the Palatinate was anxious to secure it in order to adorn his castle at Neuburg therewith, they were afraid lest if they did not put it to some immediate use they might be forced into the position of having no excuse for not making a present of it to that powerful nobleman. They therefore hastily commissioned Hans Vischer, "the Bronze-founder," to complete the work—for a quarter of it still remained uncast—and to set it up in the Rathaus. This, accordingly, he did, and erected it on the 19th of April, 1540, twenty-seven years after the Fugger family had first ordered it for their chapel. It was used for the purpose of dividing the western portion of the great Hall, where the Court of Justice held its sessions, from the rest of the room. The total cost of the work amounted to 2,796 gulden. But so admirable did the Council find it that they actually made a present of one hundred and fifty gulden to the craftsman in addition to the price named, as a token of their pleasure and satisfaction.

Unfortunately, the history of the misadventures



STEIN PHOTO.] [FORMERLY AT NÜRNBERG

25. THE RATHAUS RAILING

of this railing is not yet finished. It was removed in 1806 by the Bavarian Government, and, just for the mere value of the metal contained in it, sold to a merchant in Fürth. From him it passed again into the possession of a Nuremberger, and some years later found its way to the South of France. There all trace of this beautiful work of art has disappeared, and one is forced to the reluctant conclusion that it was melted down by the purchaser for the sake of the bronze of which it was composed. Our knowledge of it at the present day is owing to a careful set of drawings which were made of it in 1806, and which have been reproduced excellently and in full detail by Dr. Lübke in the work to which we have so often referred.

The Railing was of bronze throughout, wrought with equal care and finish on both sides, and composed of one hundred and fifty-eight separate pieces. In length it measured nearly forty feet, and stood sixteen feet high, rising at the highest point to twenty-five feet. The drawings which have come down to us show that the fertility of the artist's invention did not interfere with his harmonious conception of the whole. For though there is a truly wonderful wealth of decorative detail, all in the style of the full Renaissance, it is admirably arranged and subdued to its proper proportion.

Eight Corinthian pillars, with richly ornamented capitals, carried (I base this description on Lübke's

work) a superstructure which terminated throughout in an entablature, frieze and dog-tooth cornice. Of the seven bays comprehended by these columns, three, alternating with the grilles, formed the means of access to the other parts of the hall.

The principal entrance, in the centre, was ten feet high and was finished with a semi-circular arch formed by a moulded architrave. The spandrels of this arch were decorated with figures in relief, and these figures were supported on caps which surmounted decorative panels forming columns without bases. The two smaller and lower gates on either side had square heads with crowning pediments. All three entrances were still more distinctly set off in the composition of the whole, the centre one by means of a rectangular superstructure in the form of an ædicule with a crowning pediment, the two side ones by a segmental pediment directly over the cornice, the upper members of which were the details of the pediment. The erection over the central gate, one may remark, is a blot in the composition: there is nothing to carry the eye up to this abrupt, unsupported rectangle, and it does not harmonize with the beautiful segmental pediments over the other two entrances.

Such was the simple framework, which, says Lübke, thanks to the perfection of its arrangement and the beauty of its proportions, proved so admirably effective. But the Master contributed also to the decoration of every part of it

all the wealth of his luxuriant imagination. And he made use of the patterns of the full Renaissance, such as were to be met with in Italy about the beginning of the sixteenth century, in the works of Andrea Sansovino.

The columns, with their varied capitals in the Corinthian manner, exhibited a beautiful diversity of invention. Every surface, too, was most richly decorated; every member daintily wrought; the pilasters, shafts of the columns, pedestals, borders and doorways, were embellished with exquisitely drawn foliage-work mingled with masks and fantastic beasts in ever fresh variations. Especial mention must be made of the magnificent frieze of acanthus with figures of savage men interlaced in different moments of combat. Other friezes showed garlands, wreaths, and festoons of fruit hanging from the horns of oxen, and, between them, winged angels' heads and cornucopias overflowing with fruit and flowers.

The great bays or compartments arranged between the entrances were filled with open metalwork, the bars whereof at the points of intersection were embellished with ornaments of manifold devices. A marvellous wealth of figures in relief was to be found in every quarter—over the arch of the doorway; on the spandrels of the side gates as well as on both the crowning segmental pediments and the rectangular centre-piece. Even the angles of the cornice were adorned with fantastic beings in whose manifold forms the humour

of the Master, known to us already from our study of the Sebaldusgrab, was revealed in full play. Everywhere, and on either side of the railing, the same wealth of fancy and freshness of invention is displayed in these ever varying, never repeated forms.

In the spandrels of the arch of the central door were, on the outside, struggling heroes, on the inside, figures of Victory. On the two pediments of the side gates were the four Cardinal Virtues, surrounded by beasts and creations of the fancy. The curved pediments above them exhibited the battles of fantastic creatures of the sea, tritons and nereids, and between them, within and without, the Arms of Nuremberg. The great frieze showed us sporting children making music, and heroic scenes of the battle of the Centaurs distinguished by a bold handling of movement and a masterly freedom of form. Finally, in the pediment of the centre-piece, crowning the whole, the Saviour was portrayed in the act of benediction, holding the globe of the earth and surrounded by angel children.

The whole of this work, so far as we can judge from the drawings, adds Lübke, is full of the highest beauty and life, and of such richness in design and execution, that one is forced to reckon this noble creation as the third great masterpiece of Vischer, after the monument at Magdeburg and the tomb of St. Sebald at Nuremberg. In the general design, as well as in the details of the

ornament, the complete triumph of the worship of the antique is evident. Only the figures of the Saviour and of the Cardinal Virtues are borrowed from the ideas of Christian art. The rest is sheer paganism.

"Without question Vischer's Rathaus Railing takes the first place among the masterpieces of the distinct and complete Renaissance in Germany."

CHAPTER IX

THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF VISCHER

THE Rathaus Railing was the last and greatest of the works produced by the combined efforts of the Vischer family. It is vain to attempt to apportion the share of father and sons in it. That each had his share in it we may easily deduce from the history of it given above, and the result was a very perfect whole, the most complete and beautiful achievement of German craftsmen labouring under the overwhelming influence of neo-paganism in art.

It would be tedious and unprofitable to enumerate here the manifold works, great and small, which have been in times past attributed to the old Master by uncritical generations of credulous collectors. Almost every piece of sixteenth or seventeenth century bronze work in Germany has been at one time or another called a masterpiece by Peter Vischer. But one characteristic piece undoubtedly by him is the "Boy with Bagpipes" (*Knabe mit Dudelsack*), now in the Germanic Museum at Nuremberg. (Ill. 26.) It is a charming little work, completely in the manner of the

Nuremberg school and of the Master of the St. Maurice preserved in the Krafft House in the same town. Dürer, it will be remembered, dealt once in a popular little engraving with the same subject of a bagpiper, treating it, however, in a very different manner.

STEIN PHOTO.] [MUSEUM, NÜRNBERG

26. BOY WITH BAGPIPES

When Peter Vischer died in 1529 he left the Foundry he had established at Nuremberg to his son Paul. Paul, as we have seen, had already shown signs of being anxious to leave his native town and to seek his fortune elsewhere. The trade of the bronze-workers in Nuremberg was no longer a flourishing industry. On succeeding to the foundry, therefore, Paul quickly seized his opportunity. He sold his inheritance to his brother Hans in the same year and left Nuremberg. He went to live in Mainz, and acquired there the rights of a burgher.

Hans remained to carry on his father's business, and to complete a few of his father's inchoate commissions. He is known henceforth as Hans der Giesser—Hans the Founder. He continued to

STEIN PHOTO.] [CATHEDRAL, SCHWERIN

27. TOMB-PLATE OF DUCHESS HELENE VON MECKLENBURG

use the trade mark of the House, and on more than one occasion signed in his father's name as the lawful successor to the business. There is, for instance, a letter extant which is nominally written by Peter Vischer, but in reality by Hans in the deceased craftsman's name, for it is dated January 25th, 1529, whereas Peter Vischer died on the sixth of that month. In that letter Hans begs the Duke Heinrich von Mecklenburg to send for a monument which had already been lying a whole year in the foundry, and for which payment is demanded. This reference fixes the date of the purely heraldic tomb-plate which commemorates the Duchess Helene von Mecklenburg. (Ill. 27.)

An example of Hans' use of the Vischer mark is to be found in the tomb of Bishop Sigismund of Lindenau, in the Cathedral at Merseburg, whilst a tablet with a high relief of a Madonna in the Parish Church at Aschaffenburg bears an inscription to the effect that Johannes Vischer of Nuremberg made it in 1530. The former of these two monuments consists of a lifeless prelate kneeling before a weak and effeminate figure on the cross. It dates from the year 1544, and is a work of no importance except as an example of the extremely rapid deterioration exhibited by German art after the days of Dürer and the great Vischers. Hans was not an original artist of any talent, but merely a painstaking craftsman. Where he had the taste and designs of his father and brother to guide him he turned out some admirable work, as for ex-

ample the second of the above-named monuments. This tablet forms a pendant to the memorial of Cardinal Albrecht von Brandenburg. The Christ-Child holds an apple in one hand and stretches out the other with a life-like gesture, looking the while at the Mother who carries him on her left arm. The Madonna's head is oval in shape, not of the square German type, and her eyes are admirably full of expression. The drapery is both simple and boldly handled. But every beauty in this beautiful work, from the central figure down to the small angels who are playing musical instruments in the corners, and who take their part in the crowning of Mary, is the direct outcome of imitation—imitation of Peter Vischer and the Italian masters he had copied and loved.

Another piece which was certainly cast by Hans Vischer but for which he was not, in all probability, altogether responsible, is the tomb-plate of Bishop Lorenz of Bibra, in the Cathedral at Würzburg, for the Bishop died as early as the year 1519. The hand of Vischer's father, therefore, may well be assumed to be traceable in this design. Ten years after the Bishop's death we find Hans, through the medium of the Nuremberg Council, presenting a petition to the Bishop of Bamberg, in which the executor of my Lord of Bibra is humbly requested to pay the twenty-two gulden still owing to the craftsman.

The tomb of the Elector Johann Cicero of

Brandenburg, which is in the Cathedral at Berlin, is also signed by Hans Vischer, and it is dated 1530. (Johannes Vischer Noric. Facieb. 1530.) This tomb was a long time in the making, and in the original conception of it Peter Vischer the father was concerned. This we may gather from a letter to Prince Joachim I., wherein he acknowledges the receipt of two hundred gulden on account of the tomb which the said prince had discussed with him in his workshop, and for which, Peter reminds his Highness, he had made two designs on paper. He now requests the Prince to return to him one of those designs in order that he may be able to complete the work to the best advantage.

The rough sketch for this tomb or part of it is all that we should care to attribute to Peter Vischer in this matter. He must have entrusted the execution of the commission to one of his less gifted sons, who was following without being able completely to master the developments which were taking place in the style of the House. The tomb, by whatever hand, has clearly been executed at two different periods and in two distinct parts. In style the original portion, which is the lower, is stiff and conventional, and the architectural framework is chiefly Gothic, with here and there, as in the case of the medallion-heads, a touch of the Renaissance. The later portion is the upper, and it reflects the change which had in the meantime come over the artistic aims of

the House of Vischer; but it reflects them in a feeble and uncertain manner. The mantle of the Renaissance appears to sit uneasily on shoulders cast in the Gothic mould, and to betray the workman who has never got rid of the hardness and stiffness of his early days. But he obeys none the less the influence of the artists in the house, and after his father's death signs the monument Johann Vischer.

A much more successful instance of Hans Vischer's work in the Renaissance style would be the canopy over the tomb of St. Margaret in the Parish Church of Aschaffenburg. The authorship of this canopy must not, indeed, be attributed to that craftsman without reserve; but, if it did come from the Nuremberg foundry at all, to Hans should be given the credit of it. For it belongs to the year 1536.

A less doubtful example of his painstaking craftsmanship is to be found in the Apollo, of which an illustration is given here. (Ill. 28.) It stands now in the Court of the Rathaus at Nuremberg, and serves as a fountain-piece. Hans has based the construction of his bronze upon an engraving by Jacopo de' Barbari. But he has not hesitated to introduce several alterations from the original designs. Vischer's Apollo has the right hand, which is about to let the arrow fly from the string, more energetically drawn back, and the elbow-joint is set further back. In Barbari's drawing Apollo is represented as stretching the bow and looking

STEIN PHOTO.] [RATHAUS COURT, NÜRNBERG

28. THE APOLLO FOUNTAIN

down, although he is pointing the arrow upwards. It was a distinct improvement when Hans made the Far-darter's gaze to follow the direction of the arrow's flight. Amongst other minor alterations he has represented the God, probably out of consideration for the material in which he was working, with short hair in place of the locks streaming in the wind found in Barbari's design. The obvious fault of the piece—a fault which proves entirely ruinous to its success as a work of art—is that upon the slim, attenuated Italian figure, excessively coarse and heavy hands and feet have been grafted. And the arms are grossly exaggerated in length. The playing children and sporting dolphins on the base of the fountain are but crude adaptations of the stock-in-trade with which the labours of Peter and Hermann had supplied the paternal foundry.

The tale of the works of Hans Vischer is told, and so far as we can judge there is no reason to claim for him a higher position than that of a craftsman who conscientiously transmitted into bronze the designs and inspirations of others. The fall of the House of Vischer was, in fact, very close at hand. It may be dated in its final realization soon after the year 1549, for it was then that Hans Vischer determined to leave his native town and to settle in Eichstädt. And this is the last we hear of him in the Nuremberg records. The Council of Nuremberg, we are told, did indeed endeavour, through the mediation of the Guild of

Coppersmiths, to induce, if not to compel, him to remain at home. But he persisted in his determination to depart. He was ready even to pay the price of binding himself not to practise his craft abroad. He was to accept no commission for a bronze-work, such were the terms laid down, without the knowledge and the consent of the Council, and if he then succeeded in obtaining their sanction to undertake it, he was to execute the whole of the casting, from beginning to end, at Nuremberg. His readiness to comply with these conditions would seem to indicate that neither at home nor abroad did he any longer have hopes of success in his craft. The bronze industry, apparently, had gone from bad to worse: the fashion for bronze tombs and memorials had passed, and commissions no longer poured in upon the Vischer Foundry as they had done in the palmy days of Maximilian. Germany was already in the bitter throes of that Catholic reaction from which she was only destined to emerge after the terrible ordeal of the Thirty Years' War. Nuremberg herself was engaged in a bitter and exhausting struggle with her hereditary enemies the Margraves of Brandenburg. Wars must needs come, but artists are the first to suffer from them. For peace and prosperity are necessary to provide citizens with the means of enjoying that luxury which is art. And art is the first luxury which men under the pressure of taxation are willing to deny themselves.

It was then, probably, for these reasons, and perhaps from other considerations of which we know nothing, that Hans Vischer decided to leave the "quaint old town of toil and traffic, quaint old town of art and song" which was his birth-place. He accepted the terms which were imposed upon him by the Council, and on which he obtained leave of absence to live at Eichstädt and at other places, if he chose, for five years. At the expiration of that term, however, it was stipulated that he should return and dwell at his old home in Nuremberg. Whether he did so return we are not informed. For with his departure in 1549 he disappears for ever from our ken. Thus the members of the Vischer family were scattered, and their works, under the stress of the wars and misery which came upon the land, were forgotten or confused, and the name and fame of their house sank once more into that obscurity whence Hermann Vischer had begun to raise it just a century before.

CHAPTER X

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE WORKS OF THE VISCHERS

THE position of the Vischers in the hierarchy of the artists is not very difficult to appreciate, and it has perhaps been sufficiently indicated in the course of our enumeration of their works. They—for in forming an estimate of their work, we need not, nor cannot, separate father and sons—were great craftsmen, interpreting the teachings of other and greater artists of other lands, but yet assuredly not without an individuality and original power of their own. The view once advanced by Heideloff cannot be for a moment entertained, the view, that is, that they were mere workers in bronze who reproduced in that material the ideas and drawings of others. The evidence of our eyes, which enable us to trace the development of their style, would be enough to refute that opinion, even if we were without the documentary evidence which shows that father and sons alike were patient and painstaking draughtsmen as well as craftsmen all their lives.

In the history of German art, then, their work represents, as we have remarked above, the transition from Gothic to the Renaissance style. It

is eloquent to us of the passing from the conventions and the extravagances of late Gothic to a complete acceptance and delight in neo-paganism. And it was natural that, in the spirit of intense enthusiasm for Italian art which was upon them, these German craftsmen should reproduce what they had learnt from a Jacopo de' Barbari, a Sansovino or a Donatello. They did, indeed, plagiarize when they wished with a splendid readiness and a fervour unashamed. They copied in a spirit of sincerest flattery an angel making music, or a symbol of an Evangelist from Donatello; an Apostle or a dolphin from an Italian building; a pose, a hand or the fold of a mantle from Leonardo da Vinci. The list could be expanded. But it would not prove that the Vischers were mere servile copyists. They could do more than imitate. They could apply the lessons they had learnt from their careful study of the Italian Masters, and apply them with successful originality. It is in the energy which lives in the King Arthur, in the simple yet vigorous composition and execution of bas-reliefs, such as the Healing of the blind man on St. Sebald's tomb, or the Tucher Memorial, with their wholly admirable treatment of lines and planes; it is in the tender and spiritual feeling infused into the greatest of their bronze portraits that the unanswerable vindication lies of an imitation proved not too slavish and of a study that has not deadened but inspired.

It may indeed be the case that the lessons which

they thus taught were sterilizing: that the very enthusiasm for Italian art which they showed and generated was destined to destroy the flower of native German art. Certain it is that the Vischers founded no school and that individuality in German art was, from this time forth, blighted and crushed. But there are a dozen other causes to which this same decay of the native art may with as much probability be attributed. It is quite as likely to be due to the material facts of German domestic history as to the exotic influence of a foreign nation. But for us it remains only to take the work of these craftsmen as they gave it to the world, and to apportion to them the praise they have deserved. They aimed, with the most elaborate care and anxious perseverance, at perfection of detail, and this perfection they did frequently attain without prejudice to the proportionment and simplicity of the whole. The artist who pays great attention to the minute is too often afflicted with a kind of æsthetic myopia which prevents him from perceiving the defects of his complete design. His work becomes too curious or else florid and ineffective. This is the besetting sin of Teutonic art, and it is a danger to which metal-workers of all times and in all countries are especially liable. The Vischers in their best work succeeded in avoiding it, for there we find a repose, a dignity, a simplicity and a spirituality which raises it to the level of the very best ever executed.

CATALOGUE OF THE CHIEF WORKS

BY OR ATTRIBUTED TO HERMANN VISCHER, HIS SON PETER VISCHER AND PETER VISCHER'S SONS, HERMANN, PETER, AND JOHANN KNOWN AS HANS DER GIESSER.

HERMANN VISCHER. Died, 1487.

FONT. *Signed*, "DO MAN ZALT VON CRISTI GEPURT MCCCC UND DARNACH IM LVII JAR AN SANCT MICHAELS TAG DO WARD DIS WERK VOLBRACHT VON MEISTER HERMAN VISCHER ZU NUŘBEĞ."
Wittenberg, 1457.

TOMB-PLATES. *At Meissen and Bamberg.*

LÖFFELHOLZ CRUCIFIX.
St. Sebaldus Church, Nuremberg.

PETER VISCHER. 145(?)—1529.

MONUMENT OF COUNT OTTO IV. von Henneberg.
Stiftskirche, Römhild, 1487 (?).

FIRST DESIGN FOR A SEBALDUSGRAB. *Signed* with initials on either side of Cross with hook emblem.
Vienna, 1488.

TOMB OF BISHOP HEINRICH III., Gross von Trockau. Probably after a design by W. Katzheimer.
Cathedral, Bamberg, 1492.

MONUMENT OF BISHOP GEORG II., Marshal von Ebenet. From a design by W. Katzheimer.
Cathedral, Bamberg, 1492 (?).

TOMB OF BISHOP JOHN IV. (Johann Roth). Figures of six Apostles. *Signed*, "GEMACHT ZU NURMBERG FON MIR PETER FISCHER IM 1496 JAR."
Cathedral, Breslau, 1496.

TOMB OF ARCHBISHOP ERNST. Described, pp. 24-30. *Signed*, "GEMACHT ZU NURMBERG VON MIR PETER VISCHER ROTGIESZER VND IST VOLBRACHT WORDEN DO MAN ZALT 1.4.9.7. JAR."
Cathedral, Magdeburg, 1497.

SAINT MAURICE. Fountain in the Court of the Krafft House. *Nuremberg.*

MONUMENT OF BISHOP VEIT. After design by some other artist. 1497-1900.

MONUMENT OF COUNT EITEL, FRIEDRICH II. von Hohenzollern and his wife Magdalena, Countess of Brandenburg. After a drawing by Albrecht Dürer. Partly destroyed in 1782.
Stadtkirche, Hechingen, 1500.

MONUMENT OF COUNT HERMANN VIII. of Henneberg and his wife Elizabeth, Countess of Brandenburg. After the drawing by Albrecht Dürer.
Stiftskirche, Römhild, 1500.

TOMB OF CARDINAL-BISHOP FREDERICK. From the Vischer Foundry, but hardly from the Master's hand.
Cathedral, Cracow (d. 1503).

BISHOP'S DESK WITH BRAZEN EAGLE.
Cathedral, Halberstadt, 1510 (?).

THEODORIC, KING OF THE GOTHS. Tomb of Maximilian. *Innsbruck*, 1513.

CHRIST ON THE CROSS, on a tablet of about six inches. "This was formerly in the Silberrad Collection. Count Clam-Martinitz purchased it. After his death it came into the possession of the Director of the Academy Bergler, who had it gilded." Retberg.

At Prague, 1515.

TOMB-PLATE of Burgomaster Tiedemann Beck and his wife. *Marienkirche, Lübeck*, 1521.

MEMORIAL TABLET of Prebendary Henning Goden. (Crowning of Mary.)

Schlosskirche, Wittenberg. (*Replica in Erfurt Cathedral*), 1521.

MEMORIAL TABLET of Anton Kress, who is represented kneeling and praying before a crucifix.

S. Lorenzkirche, Nuremberg.

SMALLER WORKS IN THE GERMANIC MUSEUM, NUREMBERG, ATTRIBUTED TO PETER VISCHER.

DOG SCRATCHING ITSELF. The authenticity of this is very doubtful. It is not worthy of the Master whose name it bears. *Replicas in Berlin and Dresden.*

CARDINAL'S HEAD.

NEPTUNE (Fountain-figure).

SMALL GENIUS on a temple which rests on six columns Three beasts of the sea, hanging by their tails, look out from it. It is borne by six serpents. It probably forms a small epitome of the Sebaldusgrab.

BOY WITH BAGPIPES.

WORKS BY THE FAMILY.

ST. WENZEL (from the Vischer Foundry, but probably the work of an apprentice). *Cathedral, Prague.*

TOMB-PLATE OF DUCHESS HELENE OF MECKLENBURG (Heraldic). *Cathedral, Schwerin*, 1528.

TOMB OF ST. SEBALD. Described in Chap. IV. *Signed, see* p. 44. Made with the aid of his five sons. What share is due to each we have discussed in the text. *St. Sebalduskirche, Nuremberg*, 1508-1519.

RATHAUS RAILING. By Peter Vischer and his sons, notably Hermann, Peter and Hans. Formerly in the *Rathaus, Nuremberg*. Destroyed 1806. 1515.

PETER VISCHER THE YOUNGER

MEDALLION PORTRAIT OF HIS BROTHER HERMANN. *Inscription*, "HERMANUS · VISCHER · M·CCCCCVII." 1507.

MEDALLION PORTRAIT OF HIMSELF. *Inscription*, "EGO PETR^{9} VISCHER MEUS ALTER. 22 ANO 1509." 1509.

MEDALLION PORTRAIT OF HERMANN VISCHER. *Inscription*, "HERMAN^{9} VISCHER. AN. 1511."

KING ARTHUR, TOMB OF MAXIMILIAN. *Innsbruck* 1513.

INKSTAND. (α) Vase decorated with medallion heads and scroll work between which is repeated the emblem of the two fish, back to back, impaled with a dagger. A female figure, helmeted, stands by the vase, pointing to herself. A skull is thrust backward by her right foot. Against the vase rests a shield of quadrate form, and on the ground is a club and a label with the motto VITAM NON MORTEM RECOGITA, inscribed in relief. *Fortnum Collection, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford*, 1510(?).

INKSTAND. (*β*) A female figure, pointing upwards, rests on an oviform vase. A round shield and sword lie upon the ground, behind the figure and vase. In the foreground is a skull. Against the vase rests a tablet on which runs the motto : VITAM NON MORTEM RECOGITA. Beneath these words is the emblem of the two fishes, back to back, impaled, with the initials P.V. The date, 1525, incised with emblem of cross and hook, on the base. *Fortnum Collection, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford*, 1525.

ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE. Plaquette (Bas-Relief) In the Collection of M. Dreyfus. *Paris*, 1515(?)

ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE. Plaquette (Bas-Relief). *Berlin Museum*, 1520 (*circ.*).

ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE. Plaquette, as above. *Museum, Hamburg*, 1520 (*circ.*).

ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE. Plaquette, as above. *Institution of St. Paul, Carinthia*, 1520 (*circ.*).

All four plaquettes carry the sign of two fish back to back pierced by a nail.

MONUMENT OF FRAU MARGARETHE TUCHER OF NUREMBERG. Bas-relief of Christ meeting the sisters of Lazarus. *Signed*, with initials on either side of cross with hook emblem (*see* p. 74). NORMBERGE appears beneath the initials and sign, and under it the date, 1521. *Cathedral, Ratisbon* (*Regensburg*), 1521.

MONUMENT OF THE EISSEN FAMILY. Bas-relief of the Entombment. *Signed*, with initials "P. V." on either side of mark. The date on both sides of the cross. "NORIMBERGE" appears beneath the initials and sign. *St. Ægidius Church, Nuremberg*, 1522.

ALLEGORY ON THE REFORMATION. Aquarelle. *Signed*, "PETR. VISH. FACIEB." with date, 1524, and mark. *Goethe-National-Museum, Weimar.*

THE NUREMBERG MADONNA. Wooden model.
Germanic Museum, Nuremberg.

TOMB OF CARDINAL ALBRECHT OF BRANDENBURG, Archbishop of Magdeburg and Mainz. *Signed*, "OP^9 M. PETRI. FISCHERS. NORIMBERGE: 1525."
Stiftskirche, Aschaffenburg.

TOMB OF ELECTOR FREDERICK THE WISE. *Signed*, "OPUS. M. PETRI. FISCHER. NORIMBERGENSIS. 1527.
Schlosskirche, Wittenberg, 1527.

JOHANN VISCHER (HANS DER GIESSER) 1488-1592.

TOMB OF BISHOP LORENZ OF BIBRA. Cast by Hans; but the hand of Peter Vischer the elder is very likely traceable in the design.
Cathedral, Würzburg, 1529.

APOLLO FOUNTAIN. In the Court of the Rathaus, Nuremberg. After a drawing by Jacopo de' Barbari.
1532.

TOMB OF JOHN THE STABLE. (A weak imitation of the monument of Frederick the Wise by his brother.) *Signed*, "H. V." *Schlosskirche, Wittenberg*, 1534.

CANOPY OVER THE TOMB OF ST. MARGARET.
Stiftskirche, Aschaffenburg, 1536.

MONUMENT OF HECTOR POMER.
S. Lorenzkirche, Nuremberg, 1541.

MONUMENT OF BISHOP SIGISMUND OF LINDENAU. (*Signed* with the initials "H. F." on either side of the mark of the Vischers.) *Cathedral, Merseburg.*

TABLET WITH HIGH RELIEF OF MADONNA AND CHILD. *Signed*, "IOHANNES. VISCHER. NORIC. FACIEBAT. MDXXX." *Stiftskirche, Aschaffenburg*, 1530.

GRAVE PLATE OF BISHOP OF STADION. (Crucifix between Mary, John and two Bishops.)
St. Ægidius Church, Nuremberg, 1543.

DOUBLE MONUMENT OF ELECTOR JOACHIM I. AND JOHANN CICERO OF BRANDENBURG. *Signed* "IOHANNES VISCHER. NORIC. FACIEB. 1530." (The early portion probably in part designed by Peter the elder.)
Cathedral, Berlin.

HERMANN VISCHER.

THE APOSTLE BARTHOLOMEW and other works on the Sebaldusgrab. *Nuremberg.*

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